United Nations S/PV.6317

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6317th meeting

Wednesday, 19 May 2010, 11.40 a.m.

New York

President	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Okuda
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

Security Council mission

Briefing by the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (13 to 16 May 2010)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-36802 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 11.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council mission

Briefing by the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (13 to 16 May 2010)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Council will hear a briefing by His Excellency Mr. Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative of France, who led the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I would like to welcome the return of the members of the Council and the Secretariat who took part in the mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Gérard Araud in his capacity as the leader of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to pay tribute to the members of the Council who shouldered their responsibilities in carrying out the mission with me. I also thank the Secretariat, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss, and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for having organized the mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I believe that all participants will agree with me that it was a very intense yet extremely useful mission for us all.

I recall that the mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo was justified by the fact that we shall soon have to take important decisions regarding the future of MONUC. In that context, we wished to determine with the Congolese authorities — first and foremost President Kabila, who honoured us with a hearing, as well as members of the Government, the Congolese Parliament and local civil society — how best to achieve our common goal of restoring the sovereignty of the Congolese State over its entire territory by rebuilding a stable and peaceful countr We can do so only in the framework of a sustainabl and trusting partnership with the authorities of th Democratic Republic of the Congo. We were there no to negotiate but to hear the positions of the Congolese authorities and the various interlocutors with whom we met.

I believe that we can draw the following lesson from our meetings. First, the situation in th Democratic Republic of the Congo has evolved ove the past 10 years and progress has been made. At th same time, however, the situation remains fragile. Th humanitarian and human rights situations in particula are worrisome. As a result, any change in the situatio of the United Nations presence in the country will hav to be undertaken cautiously on the basis of th situation on the ground and avoid creating new instability. I would stress that we cannot follow artificial time frames and must be guided only by th reality of the situation on the ground.

Secondly, security sector reform is, of course, a key challenge in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as it is in many post-conflict countries. The lack of an effective republican army is, according to President Kabila himself, the greatest failure of the international community and his own Government. The Congolese authorities confirmed their desire to professionalize their army through bilateral cooperation while calling for MONUC's support in training the police force and strengthening the capacities of the judicial system. Lastly and importantly, MONUC is expected to provide logistical support for the various elections scheduled for the coming months.

Naturally, my colleagues and I could elaborate further on all these issues on the basis of our detailed discussions with all our interlocutors, in which many extremely important questions, in particular the issue of logistical support for the elections, were raised. Members of the Council will no doubt recall the scale and cost of the support we provided to the 2006 elections. Hence, support for the upcoming elections will obviously have very significant consequences for the Organization. We shall return to this topic in detail.

What are the consequences for MONUC? I believe that, first, the members of the Security Council have expressed their readiness to work with the Congolese authorities to strengthen peace and stability in the country in order to ensure the protection of

civilians and allow for the reconfiguration of MONUC. I believe that the message we conveyed to the Congolese authorities is clear. MONUC will not remain in the Democratic Republic of the Congo indefinitely. We must aim for a transition that would restore Congolese sovereignty over the entire country, but that transition will have to be prepared in cooperation with the Congolese authorities through dialogue and a common analysis of the situation before we can foresee the inevitable consequences.

Secondly, we are ready to support the efforts of the Congolese authorities in security sector reform and the implementation of the zero-tolerance policy against impunity.

Lastly, we discussed the need to continue our discussions. In that context, we are convinced that the decisions taken by the United Nations will benefit from an ongoing analysis of the situation on the ground.

Taking into account the outcome of these meetings, France is preparing a draft resolution, to be considered shortly, that will renew MONUC's mandate before the end of the month.

In conclusion, I would say in my personal capacity that we found the Congolese authorities to be very open to dialogue with the Security Council. While the Congolese authorities are, quite legitimately, foreseeing the departure of MONUC, they at no time presented any ultimatums or demands. On the contrary, they offered us an appropriate framework, and I believe that we can rest assured that the foundations have been laid for a dialogue between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Security Council. Our draft resolution will seek to reflect the quality of those exchanges.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ambassador Araud for his briefing. On behalf of the Council, I wish to thank all members of the Security Council and the Secretariat who took part in the mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was ably led by Ambassador Araud.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6318

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6318th meeting

Thursday, 20 May 2010, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Okuda
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2010/213)

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10-36935 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2010/213)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Joint Special Representative for the African Union and the United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Gambari to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of members to the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2010/213).

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Ibrahim Gambari.

I now give the floor to Mr. Gambari.

Mr. Gambari: I am very pleased and honoured to be here with the Council today to introduce the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2010/213) on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The report covers the period from 1 February to 30 April and identifies the progress made and the challenges that remain in implementing UNAMID's mandate. It addresses the political process and the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur, and discusses the progress made on the benchmarks which the Council has previously identified and approved.

As members of the Council are aware, I assumed my functions as Joint Special Representative for UNAMID on 22 January and arrived in El Fasher, the capital of Darfur, on 25 January to take up residence there. As outlined in the Secretary-General's report, Darfur has seen several positive developments since then. Notably, the Joint Chief Mediator achieved considerable progress in the Doha peace talks through the creation of the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM), merging members of the Sudan Liberation Movement-Revolutionary Forces (Tripoli Group) and part of the Road Map Group (Addis Ababa Group) into a single new movement under the leadership of Eltigani Seisi Mohamed Ateem, a prominent Darfurian politician who was at one time Governor of Darfur. This was followed by the signing of two Framework Agreements to Resolve the Conflict in Darfur between the Government and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the newly formed LJM on 23 February and on 18 March, respectively.

In April, the mediation team conducted a number of capacity-building workshops for the armed movements in order to strengthen their cohesion, as well as their capacity and readiness to engage in direct negotiations with the Government. UNAMID provided experts, including on ceasefire arrangements and gender issues, to support the mediation's efforts. The mediation team and UNAMID also facilitated a workshop with the LJM from 6 to 8 April on ceasefire implementation in order to enhance the common understanding of the mechanisms to be put in place, which are conducive to an effective ceasefire implementation.

Unfortunately, despite several attempts by the mediation, the parties were not able to agree on a final peace agreement by the 15 March deadline or on a ceasefire implementation protocol. On the contrary, JEM suspended its participation in the negotiations in early May in protest over alleged violations of the ceasefire agreement by the Government.

Indeed, the past weeks have been marked by violent clashes between the Government and JEM in all three states of Darfur. On 13 May, JEM launched attacks on a Government position, as well as on a convoy of commercial trucks escorted by Government forces, in the area of Muhajeria, South Darfur. On the following day, 14 May, the Government announced that, after two weeks of fighting, it had successfully dislodged JEM from Jebel Moon, its stronghold in Western Darfur. That same day, UNAMID troops confirmed that JEM had withdrawn from the area of Shangil Tobay in Northern Darfur, which it had

recently occupied from the Minnie Minawi faction of the Sudan Liberation Army.

UNAMID has also received reports of renewed fighting since 6 May between the Government of the Sudan and the Abdul Wahid faction of the Sudan Liberation Army in the Jebel Marra area. Furthermore, tensions remain high in Southern and, most recently, also Western Darfur following recent incidences of inter-tribal fighting between the Misseriya and Nawaiba-Rizeigat tribes near Kas in Southern Darfur. These clashes have resulted in substantial civilian fatalities and the displacement of communities, and have hampered the delivery of humanitarian assistance. In response, UNAMID has been working at all levels to improve security and protection, facilitate improved access for humanitarian agencies to the affected areas and, in the cases of inter-tribal fighting, to support the reconciliation process. I call upon all parties in Darfur to facilitate the access of UNAMID and the humanitarian community to places of recent fighting, such as Jebel Marra and Jebel Moon, so that we will be able to adequately assess and address the needs of the affected population.

In line with these efforts, I have called upon the parties to refrain from fighting and to engage each other in dialogue rather than resort to violence. I am very much of the view that the Darfur crisis can be solved not through military means, because if it could have it should have, but through negotiations and the political process. I will continue to utilize every opportunity to impress this viewpoint on the parties. I did so on the occasion I met with Abdul Wahid Mohamed al-Nur in Paris in March to discuss issues of access and security in areas under his Movement's control.

In this context, it is with grave concern that I must report that United Nations and humanitarian personnel continue to be targets of attacks and criminal acts. Indeed, the reporting period witnessed renewed attacks against UNAMID peacekeepers and cases of abduction and kidnappings. These include an attack on 18 February on a Pakistani formed police unit and, most recently, on 7 May, an attack on an Egyptian military patrol, both in South Darfur. I am saddened to report that, in these attacks, two Egyptian peacekeepers were killed, while seven Pakistani and three more Egyptian peacekeepers were seriously injured, some suffering permanent disabilities. Also in Nyala, South Darfur, four South African police officers were abducted on 11 April and held in captivity for 16 days before they were released following intensive engagement by UNAMID with all stakeholders. Furthermore, on 14 May, a UNAMID local staff member was carjacked and held for more than 24 hours before being released. Most recently, on 18 May, three staff members of the international non-governmental organization Samaritan's Purse — two Sudanese male and one female international staff members — were abducted in Abu Ajura, close to Nyala, in South Darfur.

In an attempt to thwart future recurrences of such incidents, I have given firm instructions to our troops and police contingents to respond more robustly to attacks. I have also made it clear in all my engagements that such attacks against peacekeepers constitute war crimes. Meanwhile, I continue to work closely with all relevant parties to see that the perpetrators of such cowardly acts are brought to justice promptly and that the neutrality, impartiality and inviolability of UNAMID personnel are respected by all.

Significant challenges remain in the peace process itself, including the continuing insecurity, the lack of cohesion among the armed movements, the refusal of Abdul Wahid to participate in the peace talks, and limited progress made towards the establishment of durable ceasefire arrangements and, of course, of a comprehensive agreement. In order to resume the negotiations, which were suspended during the elections period, the Joint Chief Mediator has invited all parties to Doha as of early June, and I would like to re-emphasize the need for all parties to remain engaged in the Doha peace talks. There is no alternative, in our view, to the peace talks if we are to reach a comprehensive settlement of the Darfur conflict sooner rather than later.

On my arrival in Darfur, the Mission's deployment strength had reached an overall average of about 70 per cent. I am pleased to report that deployment has since increased to about 87 per cent for the military and 74 per cent for the civilian and police components, respectively, and efforts are being made to increase these figures by the end of this year. Tactical helicopters provided by Ethiopia have arrived in-theatre and UNAMID is currently working with the Government of the Sudan on modalities and procedures for their use in both routine and emergency operations. Progress has also been made building up the

infrastructure needed to better enable the Mission to carry out its mandated activities.

These advances have enabled the Mission to increase the frequency and range of military and police patrols, which provide increased presence and protection throughout the region. However, while most of the remaining military and police personnel are scheduled to arrive in-theatre within the coming months, critical enabling units such as military utility helicopters and aerial surveillance units have not yet been pledged by anyone to the Mission. I seize this opportunity to appeal to those with the capabilities to please help us to build up these very essential assets. Without them, it will be difficult for the Mission to fulfil its full potential as envisaged in the founding Security Council resolutions.

In view of the achievement of these substantial levels of deployment, consensus has emerged that UNAMID should now begin to shift focus from deployment-related issues to mandate implementation. Accordingly, since taking up my assignment in January, I have outlined the following four priorities as my vision and goals for the mission.

First, we must enhance the security and safety of United Nations and humanitarian personnel, as well as protection for the civilian population and internally displaced persons (IDPs). This will remain the core mandate of UNAMID.

Secondly, we must provide more proactive support for the ongoing peace process, because I believe very strongly that we should not just sit in El Fasher and wait for a peace agreement to be concluded that we will then have to implement. Rather, we should inject ourselves into the peace process and talk with all the parties — the armed elements, the Government of the Sudan, the Government of Qatar, which is acting as facilitator, and the Joint Chief Mediator himself — so that we can get a comprehensive peace agreement as soon as possible.

The third element of my vision is to facilitate the ongoing normalization of relations between Chad and the Sudan, because when those relations are good, we, as the people on the ground, are the beneficiaries. When relations are not good, of course we, and the people of West Darfur in particular, are the first victims.

The fourth element of my vision is to enhance and facilitate support for recovery, reconstruction and development in Darfur. In that regard, I would like to emphasize that we are not going to do recovery and development, but we are going to be at the forefront of encouraging those who have the capabilities and the mandate to do development.

I should also like to refer to the recently concluded elections in the Sudan, with specific reference to Darfur. Those elections have created new dynamics for the political process in Darfur. I welcome the fact that the polling took place in a peaceful and orderly manner throughout the three states of Darfur, in spite of strong opposition voiced by the armed movements prior to the polling period. Despite certain flaws registered by the international observer missions, the fact of the matter is that we now three new Governors, 144 members of the three state assemblies in Darfur, and 72 representatives of Darfur in the National Assembly. It is therefore important and necessary in our view to factor this reality into the peace process in view of the fact that these are elected Darfurians. We also have to extend our efforts to cover such important stakeholders as IDPs and refugees, whose views of the peace process may not have been sufficiently reflected in the electoral process.

In this connection, I wish to note that the recent strategic review meeting of the African Union and the United Nations, as well as the consultative meeting between the two organizations and international partners engaged on Sudanese issues, held on 7 and 8 May in Addis Ababa, recognized and stressed the need for the Darfur political process to be "inclusive and to address all issues of concern to the people of Darfur, including peace and security, land issues, social and economic issues, justice and reconciliation". The participants agreed that the peace process in Doha should continue and that, building on the progress achieved in Doha, UNAMID should initiate and lead a complementary political process on the ground in Darfur — a kind of a home-grown process — to ensure the systematic and sustained engagement of all Darfurian stakeholders. Accordingly, UNAMID has begun to develop strategies and put in place mechanisms to systematically engage newly elected officials, IDPs, refugees, Arab tribes, traditional leaders and the native administration and, especially, women, young people and all other representatives of civil society on all issues relevant to peace and security and stability in Darfur. The goal is to reassure them of their ability to have input in the peace process and aid them in articulating their

concerns. We are doing this in the strong belief that it will contribute in no small measure to public acceptance and ownership of the outcome of the peace process, thereby making it sustainable.

There are indications that the recent rapprochement between the Governments of Chad and Sudan, a development the Joint Chief Mediator and I have been working hard to support, is holding and has actually been strengthened. Efforts at facilitating and enhancing the implementation of the commitment made by both countries in pursuit of the agreed goals of their recent rapprochement are also continuing. I recently returned from a mission to N'Djamena, where I met President Deby with a view to facilitating and encouraging his commitment to the obligations undertaken by both countries on normalizing relations following the 15 January 2010 agreement between them.

In this context, I am pleased to report to the Council that during the reporting period, the Mission has not recorded any report of military activity or cross-border attacks. In line with their agreement, both countries have set up a joint border monitoring force comprising 1,500 soldiers from each country, a total of 3,000, formed to enhance cross-border security. The headquarters of the joint force is El Geneina, Western Darfur. I am also pleased to add that on 10 April 2010, the major border crossing point between the two countries, close to El Geneina in Western Darfur, reopened for transit and commercial activities, as many Chadian registered commercial vehicles have been spotted going across that border.

Let me briefly turn to the issue of the return of IDPs and refugees to their homes in a voluntary, appropriate and dignified manner. It is my firm conviction that the nexus between peace, security and development cannot be overemphasized when we contemplate the complex challenge of resolving the Darfur conflict in a sustainable and effective manner. The retention of an estimated 2.3 million inhabitants in IDP camps in Darfur constitutes a time bomb, as experiences elsewhere, such as in Lebanon and in Gaza, have demonstrated. One cannot permanently keep over 2 million people in IDP camps without experiencing some radicalization of the population and some extremism.

In order to avoid such negative trends, a programme for the voluntary and sustainable return of IDPs and refugees to their homes or to areas close to the camps must be vigorously pursued. The primary responsibility for this, of course, rests with the Government of Sudan, which must allocate significant financial and other resources for the recovery and development of Darfur. However, the Government of Sudan cannot accomplish this goal alone and it should not be left alone to do it.

Beyond the needs of those in the IDP camps, other Darfurians must also see benefits from the dividends of peace. Hence, there is a need to support appropriate early recovery, reconstruction and development projects and encourage the provision of basic services and economic revitalization and livelihoods. To that end, UNAMID has intensified its cooperation with the United Nations country team. Last Sunday, on 16 May, I had the honour to co-chair, together with Mr. Georg Charpentier, United Nations Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan, a meeting in El Fasher of the United Nations country team and UNAMID during which we discussed cooperation and coordination among all actors involved in this regard.

Furthermore, UNAMID has started to increase its presence in the rural areas of Darfur, in particular in areas of potential returns, so as to contribute to enhancing security and safety there. We are also looking into ways to use our available assets, such as military engineering and logistics units, to assist the Government of Sudan in the rehabilitation of the rail network in Darfur and in the development of water sources throughout Darfur.

On this note, I welcome and commend the efforts of all donors, both traditional and new, in supporting the needs of the people in Darfur. Recently, at the international donors conference for Darfur which took place in Cairo on 21 March, co-chaired by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Egypt and Turkey, pledges of over $850 million were made, and several projects, including model villages and housing for IDPs who may prefer to relocate to areas contiguous to or near urban areas and water resources, were unveiled. In addition, the Government of Qatar has pledged seed money of up to $1 billion towards setting up a Darfur recovery fund.

I wish to note that during the meetings between the African Union and the United Nations and international partners, to which I referred earlier and

which took place on 7 and 8 May in Addis Ababa, participants stressed the importance of promoting early recovery and reconstruction efforts in Darfur and welcomed UNAMID's active advocacy for and appropriate engagement in this matter. It is my hope that the Security Council will encourage such positive gestures and facilitate similar efforts by the United Nations family towards sustainable stabilization of the situation in Darfur.

I would like to close by making an overall assessment of the situation in Darfur and of UNAMID's performance during the reporting period. I am of the view that, despite our best efforts, results have been mixed. In the areas of security and the protection of the civilian population, some progress has indeed been made, but pockets of instability remain. The peace process, which I have been proactively supporting under the leadership of the Joint Mediation Team, has progressed, but a deep sense of mistrust between the parties remains, and some parties are not engaging in the process.

UNAMID is nearing full deployment, which is a positive development, thus enabling personnel now to focus more on the implementation of the mandate. In other words, they are moving from deployment to employment. But we still lack critical enabling units.

Despite these challenges, however, UNAMID is working at all levels and on a range of fronts to promote peace and stability in Darfur. The challenges confronting the Mission are considerable, but my colleagues and I remain determined to see that progress is made in stabilizing the security situation in Darfur and ending this conflict which has brought untold sorrow to the peoples of Darfur.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Gambari for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.

United Nations S PV.6319

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6319th meeting

Monday, 24 May 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Silajdžić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Letter dated 14 May 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/235)

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10-37267 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Letter dated 14 May 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/235)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to acknowledge the presence of His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. On behalf of the Security Council, I extend a warm welcome to Mr. Silajdžić.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Croatia and Serbia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Vilović (Croatia) and Mr. Starčević (Serbia) took seats at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Valentin Inzko, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Inzko to take a seat at the Council table.

I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano, in which he requests to be invited, in his capacity as acting head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. If I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Serrano.

There being no objection it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Serrano to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to document S/2010/235, containing a letter dated 14 May 2010 from the Secretary-General transmitting the thirty-seventh report of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by His Excellency Mr. Valentin Inzko, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Inzko: These are special days for Bosnia and Herzegovina, as it is celebrating 18 years of membership of the United Nations. But they are also special days for my home country of Austria, as it was presiding over the Security Council in the month of May exactly 18 years ago. On 20 May 1992, the then Permanent Representative of Austria, Mr. Peter Hohenfellner, as President of the Security Council, proposed to this body the adoption of a decision recommending to the General Assembly that Bosnia Herzegovina be admitted to the United Nations.

At the same meeting, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 755 (1992), which endorsed that recommendation. Also at that meeting, the Council President prophetically stated that "All the members of the Council are confident that Bosnia and Herzegovina will make a significant contribution to the work of the Organization" (*S/PV.3079, p. 4*).

Upon that historic recommendation, 18 years ago, Bosnia Herzegovina was admitted as a Member of the United Nations by virtue of General Assembly resolution 46/237, adopted without a vote on 22 May 1992. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate Bosnia Herzegovina wholeheartedly. I am very glad that, as predicted 18 years ago, Bosnia and Herzegovina is indeed making a significant

contribution to the work of the Organization as a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

I am also very pleased to see President Silajdžić sitting in the Security Council Chamber today, as it was he who, 18 years ago as Minister for Foreign Affairs, worked tirelessly for Bosnia and Herzegovina's recognition and membership in the United Nations. He did so then without having an office, a mission or even a fax connection. He has witnessed the tremendous progress of his country from war and admission to the Organization to its election to the Security Council.

We should keep that achievement of Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy at the forefront of our thinking as we deal in detail with the challenges that the country still faces. The country is facing problems that urgently need to be solved, but the fact is that it has come a long way. We should use that progress as an incentive to complete the work that still remains ahead.

Membership of the Security Council is the greatest and most visible reflection of Bosnia and Herzegovina's new standing in the international community. In addition, this year, the country has substantially completed the road map that may make it possible for Bosnian citizens to travel to countries in the European Schengen area without first having to apply for a visa. The European Union (EU) recommendation in that regard is still pending, but it could come as early as next week.

Furthermore, last month, at its summit in Estonia, NATO agreed to a membership action plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the condition that the issue of State ownership of military real estate is resolved. That success came as Bosnia and Herzegovina had already decided to accelerate the destruction of unsafe weapons and explosives left over from the war and to deploy troops to the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan.

Those three examples show how Bosnia and Herzegovina can concretely move forward, to the benefit of its citizens and the counties of the region.

I believe that an additional factor which strengthened Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress during the reporting period — and one that has received far too little attention — is the recent and much hoped-for improvement in regional cooperation, and consequently in the prospects for regional reconciliation, that is now evident. Put simply, the Western Balkans is a much better neighbourhood now than it was two or three years ago.

In the spirit of regional reconciliation, leaders and parliamentarians in Croatia and Serbia have addressed the tragedy of the 1990s in an honest and decent way. Let me here refer to President Tadić's efforts and to the Serbia Parliament's declaration on the Srebrenica genocide, and to the admission by Croatia of its role in the atrocities of the 1990s. This is creating space for a new and constructive dialogue that will benefit people throughout the Western Balkans.

It should be mentioned in this context that Turkey's role in this process has also been constructive, as was illustrated by the signature of the Istanbul Declaration on improving relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. In the same spirit, leaders of the region and the wider international community will gather on 11 July for the fifteenth commemoration of the atrocities in Srebrenica. President Silajdžić will be travelling today or tomorrow for an historic, unprecedented visit to Belgrade to strengthen this new sense of neighbourhood. Similarly, in a gesture of reconciliation, over the coming weekend President Josipović of Croatia will visit places where atrocities were committed in central and northern Bosnia in a gesture of reconciliation. These represent major steps forward, and we must seize the possibilities that they open up.

The informal EU/Western Balkans summit, which should gather some 40 delegations in Sarajevo on 2 June, can additionally boost this trend towards regional reconciliation and forward-looking cooperation. The coming and recent visits to Bosnia and Herzegovina by senior politicians and officials of the EU, the United States and elsewhere reflect not only international interest in the country, but also some concern over its inability to take advantage of the possibilities that are now open to it. As I pointed out when I spoke to the Council in November (see S/PV.6222), Bosnia and Herzegovina remains afflicted by a lack of a basic and fundamental consensus about what sort of country it should be or could be — whether a more centralized or a very decentralized State — and how to achieve either option.

The leadership of Republika Srpska has, for example, led the way in undermining State-level institutions and by threatening to hold an entity

referendum that would seek to repudiate the authority of the High Representative and decisions under Dayton. Any entity referendum challenging the authority of the Dayton Accords or the High Representative under annex X, or impinging upon the constitutional responsibilities of the State, would be unlawful and endanger the entity itself, as the entities derive their legitimacy from the same Accords.

References in an international gazette to the possible emergence of a new State, and proposals that nationalist politicians should start discussing the peaceful dissolution of Bosnia and Herzegovina or that the country should not exist at all have been met by counter-statements to the effect that the disaffected elements are welcome to leave, but will not be allowed to take any part of the country with them.

Thus, while regional prospects for reconciliation have improved, the language and logic of politics inside Bosnia and Herzegovina appears to have rather deteriorated. After Serbia's Parliament expressed its formal regret in March over the Srebrenica massacres, the Republika Srpska Government threatened to retract its endorsement of the 2004 report which established the facts about the events of July 1995 in Srebrenica.

The truth about Srebrenica and other shameful episodes of the war has been well established by the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia through criminal investigation, forensic research and testimony scrutinized and tested at war-crimes trials. The way forward is to face the truth and use it to ensure that such crimes are never allowed to happen again, and not to deny the truth.

While I have used my executive powers with appropriate restraint, these have been faced with continued resistance from the Republika Srpska. On 14 December, I extended the mandates of foreign judges and prosecutors working in the War Crimes Division of the State Court. This decision, based on the country's obligations to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, enjoyed the unanimous support of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council. The decision has, however, been strongly criticized by Republika Srpska.

Meanwhile, there have been problems in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where a divided Government limped from crisis to crisis during the reporting period. The Federation has failed to complete the appointments to Government and judiciary functions and the need to make budget cuts required by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the face of determined opposition from members of war veterans' organizations. The Federation has considerable difficulty dealing efficiently with the necessary IMF conditions, which may affect Bosnia and Herzegovina's fiscal sustainability in the medium and long terms. In this regard, as far as IMF negotiations are concerned, the situation is much better in Republika Srpska.

Let me give another example of the difficulties we face with the 22 December ruling of the European Court of Human Rights against discrimination against minorities in the election to the State-level Presidency and House of Peoples. While Republika Srpska representatives would agree to narrow constitutional amendments that would implement the 22 December ruling, Federation politicians, on their side, insist on far more wide-ranging changes, seeking to use the Court's verdict to promote their own very different visions of how the country should be restructured. The net result is that the European Court of Human Rights ruling will not be put into practice before the 3 October general elections, meaning that this autumn once again not all citizens will be able to candidate to all positions. This issue must therefore be a top priority of the new Government.

This chronic political disagreement has occurred at a time when unemployment has continued to rise, living standards have continued to fall, and the capacity of the authorities to meet the basic needs of citizens has been systematically eroded by declining revenue. With great difficulty the relevant authorities are striving to meet the IMF terms for a €1.2-billion Stand-by Arrangement; at the same time, generous development assistance continues to come from the World Bank, the EU and other international financial institutions and bilateral donors. However, none or very few of the key reforms that would allow the country to take full advantage of this assistance, and which would revive the economy and reverse the decline in employment and living standards, have been enacted during the reporting period; nor have the domestic authorities made any progress on the remaining objectives and conditions — the so-called 5+2 agenda — set by the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board in February 2008 for the

transition of Office of the High Representative (OHR) to a reinforced EU-led presence.

The objectives relating to State and defence property remain unmet. In December 2009 I provided the State, entity and Brcko District Governments with an inventory of the properties in question, but this has yet to jump-start constructive negotiation. Serb and Bosniak leaders rejected the OHR inventory — for opposite reasons. At the same time, the entities have declined to conduct their own assessment of what it is that institutions require in order to function properly. Now, unilateral steps to register properties under the ownership of the entities or the State threaten the whole exercise.

NATO's decision in April to make a Membership Action Plan conditional upon the State's taking ownership of properties required by the armed forces has so far shown no sign of producing a breakthrough. All this means that the condition according to which the Peace Implementation Council must be in a position to make "a positive assessment of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina based on full compliance with the Dayton Peace Agreement" looks somewhat remote, and it is not clear when a decision to close the Office of the High Representative could be taken.

In this respect, let me here welcome the European Council conclusions of 25 January, expressing readiness to extend the executive operation of the EU Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina should the situation require it. I myself remain convinced that we will need this presence beyond 2010 for reassurance purposes. Yet the authorities have demonstrated that progress can be made, as they pushed through the reforms that have made the country's bid for visa liberalization with the European Union a credible one. They did this in response to popular pressure on an issue concerning which the connection between reform and immediate benefits for citizens was clear.

In this respect, I have repeatedly highlighted the need to stress the causal links between reforms required for Euro-Atlantic integration and the practical benefits citizens will derive from the process. In the case of visa reform, the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina have shown that they are able to respond to the logic of popular demand. I believe this can be applied to other reforms that have been blocked until now. In other words, the election campaign can actually be used to create momentum for change, instead of being used as an excuse to keep things as they are. Elections in October could in fact help, particularly if voters both seek to hold their representatives to a real accounting during the campaign and then turn out in force on election day.

This year's election will see a surge of young people who are eligible to vote for the first time. This may alter the electoral arithmetic, and even a modest change could produce more constructive coalitions in the next Parliament. That is most likely to happen if the international community remains focused on Bosnia and Herzegovina, requires absolute respect for the Dayton Peace Agreement and continues to foster a constructive atmosphere for constitutional and other reforms. This is the way to get to the objective that we all want to reach — where Bosnia and Herzegovina can move towards full Euro-Atlantic integration under its own steam — and that means with full ownership of the responsibilities that go along with it.

I am truly convinced that this possibility can become a reality for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its people have shown on many occasions that they indeed have the talent needed. And I will, as High Representative but also as the EU Special Representative, continue to dedicate all my efforts to assisting and supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina's efforts in this direction. The European Union, too, is firmly committed to accompanying Bosnia and Herzegovina on this path, as was confirmed by High Representative Ashton's recent visit to the country.

Let me conclude by congratulating Bosnia and Herzegovina once again and by wishing it success in its contribution to the work of the Security Council.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Inzko for his briefing.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Silajdžić (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, and to congratulate you on acceding to the presidency of the Security Council.

(*spoke in English*)

It was 18 years ago almost to the day that Bosnia and Herzegovina became a Member of the United Nations. In these 18 years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has travelled the difficult road from being a country that

suffered the worst atrocities and civilian plight in Europe since the Second World War to being a non-permanent member of the Security Council and an active participant in the peacebuilding efforts of the international community. As a grim reminder of Bosnia and Herzegovina's recent pest, this July we will solemnly mark the fifteenth anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide.

We have made progress in strengthening and advancing relations with our neighbouring countries Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, contributing in that way to regional cooperation as one of the major prerequisites for lasting peace and stability in the region. Bosnia and Herzegovina has also made continued progress in meeting conditions for Euro-Atlantic integration. At their meeting held on 22 and 23 April in Tallinn, NATO foreign ministers granted the Membership Action Plan to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Accession to the Membership Action Plan is recognition of the progress achieved and a strong stimulus for an even greater commitment to Euro-Atlantic integration. Bosnia and Herzegovina has also met all the conditions required for visa liberalization with the European Union.

Even though Bosnia and Herzegovina has undoubtedly achieved significant progress, I have come here today to tell the Council that the Dayton Peace Agreement has not been implemented in its central parts. I will go into some detail on this subject, and I ask Council members to bear with me in those details.

The Dayton Peace Agreement has been continuously adjusted to the "realities on the ground", which have resulted from the systematic violations of the Agreement, and not the other way around. This is demonstrated by the fact that the report the High Representative has submitted here today (S/2010/235) is the thirty-seventh of its kind.

Most of the problems and challenges that Bosnia and Herzegovina faces today stem from the failure to implement the central elements of the Dayton Peace Agreement, particularly its annex 7, which guarantees the right of all refugees and displaced persons freely to return to their homes of origin in safety — a right confirmed by this Council's resolutions. As a result of the systematic and continuous violations of annex 7, out of some 46 per cent of non-Serbs who lived in Republika Srpska — an entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina — before they were either killed or cleansed, only 8 per cent live there now.

The failure to implement annex 7 has resulted in the most serious constitutional problem facing Bosnia and Herzegovina today. The so-called entity voting mechanism, which was intended as a safeguard for the legitimate territorial interests of the two entities as perceived by all three constituent peoples, has morphed into a mechanism by which one ethnic group from one entity blocks the State without any input from the other constituent peoples. And this mechanism continues to be used as if annex 7 had been fully implemented.

The entity voting mechanism allows only 10 Serb deputies elected from the Republika Srpska entity — who constitute only 22 per cent of Parliament's 42 deputies — to block any proposed decision of the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Over the past 13 years, these 10 deputies have used entity voting to block over 260 proposed laws. In contrast, Parliament enacted less than 150 laws in the same period. This ethnic monopoly on territorial interests solidifies ethnic division, renders the State dysfunctional and in turn perpetuates instability.

Certainly, the views expressed here are not shared by all political actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but the United States Congress, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission have all rightly identified entity voting as the main obstacle to the efforts to transform Bosnia and Herzegovina into a viable and self-sustainable country, capable of functioning in the absence of the Office of the High Representative. All of these institutions have recommended that entity voting be either eliminated or reformed, and all of their recommendations have so far been ignored.

The second fundamental problem — the question of State property — stems from the fact that the rights given to the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina through Annex 4, which is the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, have been set aside in favour of political compromises necessitated by the so-called realities on the ground.

Under article 1 of the Dayton Constitution, Bosnia and Herzegovina was established as the sole legal successor to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, as such, it remains the owner of all property registered to those predecessors. Similarly,

under the Succession Agreement — the agreement among all countries of the former Yugoslavia — Bosnia and Herzegovina is the owner of all former-Yugoslavia property on its territory. The entities have no ownership rights and no basis for claims over any such property.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's ownership of State property is the right guaranteed by article I of the Dayton Constitution and was unequivocally confirmed as such by a final and binding verdict of the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina — a court created by the Office of the High Representative, generously funded and supported by many Governments and staffed by international judges and prosecutors from an even greater number of countries.

It is therefore unacceptable to seek consensus to implement this existing law or to seek political compromises with those who block its implementation. The same mistake was made when the High Representative imposed entity-based privatization in 1998, with obvious negative consequences for the return of refugees, the consolidation of the single economic space and the reintegration of society in general.

One of the demands made by Slobodan Milosevic at Dayton was to divide State property between the entities. He did not achieve that goal, and it is puzzling that some still insist on that demand. It is true that Bosnia and Herzegovina has two entities under the Dayton Peace Agreement, but that Agreement also preserved the legal continuity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including, of course, ownership of the State property. That was one of the key balances that made Dayton possible, and it also served as a primary cohesive factor between the two entities. State property is as central to the Dayton Peace Agreement as the two-entity structure.

The High Representative rightly points out the continuing challenges to the Dayton Peace Agreement by the Republika Srpska entity authorities. But these challenges will not be answered by strengthening the position of the challengers, especially bearing in mind their open calls for a referendum on secession. Partitioning State property between the entities will obviously strengthen those claims and eliminate a primary cohesive factor. There is obviously a reason why that was not done in Dayton, and it cannot be quietly introduced now without far-reaching consequences. The High Representative's recent letter to the State Attorney of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in which he called on the State Attorney to stop the registration of State property, despite the fact that the State Attorney was merely acting on the basis of existing law and legal precedents, encountered strong opposition in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The High Representative did not use the Bonn powers, however. Thus this letter can only be construed as pressure on the courts and the judicial system that is outside the purview of those powers.

The Security Council had a very good reason for insisting on the implementation of the Dayton Agreement "in its entirety" (*resolution 1031 (1995), para. 30*) when it adopted resolution 1031 (1995). That is precisely what we advocate. The solutions and the myriad difficult compromises built into Dayton ensured that the Agreement would function if and only if all of its elements were fully implemented. The non-implementation of one element made the functioning of many others difficult, if not impossible.

Today, the implementation of Dayton in its entirety has been practically replaced by the implementation of the five goals and two conditions. Some of those goals and conditions have nothing to do with the Dayton Agreement — the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union, for example. Some of them were resolved in Dayton including the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina owns most of the State property as the legal successor of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as former High Representative Lajčák officially communicated. Some other central elements of Dayton are conspicuously missing from this list of five plus two: the right of refugees to return, for example.

It is not the sheer arbitrariness of this list that is disconcerting, but the fact that the closure of the Office of the High Representative, rather than the implementation of Dayton, has become a goal in and of itself. And one of the central elements of Dayton has been marked for change in order to serve that goal, namely, Bosnia and Herzegovina's ownership of State property.

This will not lead to Dayton's implementation in its entirety, but, more likely, to its demise. Dayton was a difficult compromise, creating the necessity for a number of its elements to function in unison. The

Office of the High Representative was put in place to ensure precisely such functioning, not to give legitimacy to à-la-carte implementation, just so it can leave. If the mission of the Office of the High Representative has morphed from full implementation mode to departure mode, we can only conclude that this transformation is not in accordance with the clear language of Council resolution 1031 (1995).

At the same time, we cannot be expected to provide assistance for that transformation. Not only do we take our international obligations — including under Security Council resolutions — seriously. We, moreover, remain conscious of the dangers facing Bosnia and Herzegovina if Dayton's central elements are slowly reduced, modified or completely taken away. For, if one central element of Dayton is on the table, so must be all the others.

In conclusion, I wish to state that article I of the Dayton Constitution, by which Bosnia and Herzegovina does not disappear but continues its legal existence as a State, was the outcome of the patriotic struggle and sacrifices of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the assistance of friendly countries. That is precisely why no one has the mandate to question the meaning of that article or the other pillars of the Dayton Peace Agreement. It is our hope that the Security Council will continue to uphold the commitments of the Dayton Peace Agreement and remain the guardian of peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region.

Ms. Anderson (United States of America): Let me begin by welcoming to the Council Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I thank him very much for his comments today. Let me also welcome High Representative Inzko and thank him for his comprehensive and excellent briefing. The United States deeply appreciates his dedication and hard work in support of implementation of the Dayton Accords.

Nearly 15 years have passed since the signing of the Dayton Accords. In that time, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made significant progress to overcome its past. The country now has a single military, has signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union (EU) and has taken steps towards NATO membership.

We welcome the decision of Bosnia and Herzegovina's leaders to destroy excess arms and ammunition. The United States is proud to be a partner in that important effort. And in January of this year, we welcomed Bosnia and Herzegovina as a valued colleague on the Security Council. These important accomplishments all show that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina want to live in a stable, functional State capable of European and Euro-Atlantic integration. The United States supports the aspiration of Bosnia and Herzegovina's people for a European future.

With this in mind, let me highlight three concerns raised by High Representative Inzko's report (see S/2010/235). First, while some progress has been made on defence and other necessary reforms, more needs to be done. We share the High Representative's conclusion that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made only limited progress in addressing constitutional and other reforms necessary for EU candidacy. We urge Bosnia's leaders to cross the ethnic divide and find the compromises needed to build a functional State that can meet EU and NATO requirements.

As Vice-President Biden said to the Bosnian Parliament on 19 May 2009, the United States is proud to support a peaceful, successful Bosnia and Herzegovina. But to achieve this goal, Bosnia's leaders must work together across ethnic lines and party lines and interact with the rest of the world as a single sovereign State.

Along with our European partners, the United States will continue to engage with participants from all of Bosnia and Herzegovina's communities in promoting the constitutional reforms needed for the country's eventual integration into the EU and NATO. But ultimately, the burden of achieving the country's aspirations rests on Bosnia and Herzegovina's political leaders and depends on their responsibility, commitment and willingness to compromise.

Secondly, like many in Bosnia and Herzegovina and many in this Chamber, the United States looks forward to the day when the Office of the High Representative will no longer be needed. Again, we urge Bosnia's leaders to find the compromises needed to fulfil the remaining requirements, particularly on immovable defence property. In this regard, we also share High Representative Inzko's concerns about what the report calls a deteriorated political atmosphere, including challenges to the High Representative's authority. In numerous resolutions, the Council has

affirmed the High Representative's Bonn powers and his responsibility to exercise them to ensure peace, stability and compliance with the Dayton Agreement.

Thirdly, as we approach the October 2010 national elections, we are concerned that divisive and damaging political rhetoric may threaten regional reconciliation efforts, undermine progress on the country's Euro-Atlantic agenda and distract attention from real national priorities. It is simply unacceptable to propose or speculate about the dissolution of the State, even a peaceful dissolution. It is important for the country's leadership to break the troubling cycle in which narrow ethnic and short-term political interests are pursued at the expense of long-term objectives that would benefit all of Bosnia and Herzegovina's communities.

Despite the challenges that lie ahead, Bosnia and Herzegovina's responsible and constructive tenure on the Council to date demonstrates again the positive role that the country can play in the international community. We welcome the progress that Bosnia and Herzegovina and its neighbours have made to promote reconciliation, improve bilateral relations and confront the legacy of the past by condemning war crimes.

In April, NATO foreign ministers invited Bosnia into NATO's Membership Action Plan, but with the clear expectation that the issue of immovable defence property must be resolved before Bosnia and Herzegovina can advance in the process. This decision shows the international community's confidence that Bosnia and Herzegovina will undertake the important reforms still needed to strengthen its institutions and function more effectively as a State. The ultimate responsibility for resolving these issues rests with its leadership.

The United States remains committed to the framework established by the Dayton Accords and to strengthening State institutions. We also remain firmly committed to Bosnia and Herzegovina's sovereignty and territorial integrity and its integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions, in line with the goals of its leaders and the wishes of its citizens.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): At the outset, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, and to thank him for his statement made this morning. My appreciation also goes to High Representative Valentin Inzko for his comprehensive briefing. I commend the dedicated efforts of Mr. Inzko and his staff made with sincerity and passion to address complex and sensitive issues on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina on its contribution to international peace and security as a member of the Security Council since January. The successful post-conflict nation-building effort of Bosnia and Herzegovina is amply reflected in its active membership of the Council.

Encouraging positive developments include the acceptance of Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for a NATO Membership Action Plan, with some conditions, and the prospects for visa liberalization for travel by citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to European Union (EU) countries.

The country's relations with Serbia have improved dramatically, as President Silajdžić and President Tadić signed the Istanbul Declaration at the recent summit meeting, along with President Gül of Turkey. We commend the flexibility shown by both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and the important role played by Turkey in achieving this milestone.

Japan fully supports the policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina towards Euro-Atlantic integration. We hope that the country will be able to meet the five objectives and two conditions soon and that the transition from the Office of the High Representative to the EU Special Representative will be realized at the earliest possible date.

Bosnia and Herzegovina can advance its efforts towards accession to the EU by accelerating constitutional reform. In that connection, we note with concern that neither the five objectives and two conditions nor constitutional reform have seen concrete progress. Certain potential causes of instability remain, as manifested by the recent adoption of the law on referendum by the National Assembly of the Republika Srpska.

It is important that the October general elections be conducted in a fair and stable environment. We urge all parties to refrain from escalating the ethnocentric rhetoric and to adopt a reasonable and restrained attitude. The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina requires continued engagement by the international community. We believe it is essential that the High

Representative make full and appropriate use of his authority. When a negative sign is detected, he should exercise his early warning function and hold consultations with the parties concerned.

Japan, as a member of and major contributor to the Peace Implementation Council, reaffirms its full support for the High Representative's role. Japan continues to contribute to the economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to promoting human security for every individual in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in other countries in the Western Balkans.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): We thank Mr. Inzko, High Representative and European Union Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, for his briefing. We welcome the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, His Excellency Mr. Silajdžić, and thank him for his statement.

We commend the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina for its important contribution to the stability of the country. We also commend the High Representative for his efforts in facilitating the implementation of the Dayton Agreement. It is important that all leaders in the country continue to commit themselves to dialogue and peaceful coexistence.

We note with concern from the briefing the reported political actions questioning the sovereignty and sustainability of Bosnia and Herzegovina's State institutions, as well as the continuing challenges to the authority of the High Representative and the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council. We call on all leaders, particularly the authorities of Republika Srpska, to refrain from anti-Dayton rhetoric that challenges the sovereignty and constitutional order of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is important that all parties, including the neighbours of Bosnia and Herzegovina, uphold their commitments in the spirit of good neighbourliness and peaceful coexistence, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR) has continued to play a critical role in providing the crucial reassurance needed by the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We note that it has assisted the Office of the High Representative and other international organizations in fulfilling their respective mandates. We therefore salute EUFOR, in collaboration with the armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for contributing to a safe and secure environment. It is important, however, that every effort be made to support the role of the national security forces so that they can assume responsibility for protection.

We welcome the progress that has been achieved in the country in the entrenchment of the rule of law. We acknowledge the efforts of the European Union Police Mission, in coordination with the High Representative, to support police reform and coordinating the policing aspects of combating major and organized crime.

We note, however, that the situation of refugees and displaced persons remains outstanding. This is a potentially destabilizing matter if not addressed in a holistic way. We therefore call on the authorities to address this matter with a view to ensuring their return and resettlement.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has made tremendous economic progress. However, the global economic crisis has had an adverse impact and the country needs to mitigate the effects of the global slow-down on the economy, particularly by protecting the most vulnerable population. We therefore call upon the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of the international partners, to focus on addressing these issues, which could have serious implications for the stability of the country.

Finally, we once again commend the High Representative and his staff for the good work that they are doing.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the High Representative for the statement that he has just given and assure him of France's support. I welcome the presence of Mr. Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and congratulate him on his country's presence in the Security Council. France associates itself with the statement to be made by the representative of the European Union.

We welcome the progress made by Bosnia and Herzegovina on two important matters. First, on the matter of the road map for lifting the visa obligations, the report transmitted on 26 April by the European Commission to the Council of Europe and the European Parliament stresses the progress made on securitizing documents in the fight against illegal

immigration and for readmission. This represents a step forward that brings Bosnia closer to the liberalization anticipated by Europeans and Bosnians alike. Secondly, on the matter of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a month ago the allies offered Bosnia and Herzegovina the Membership Action Plan on the condition that the property of the Bosnian Ministry of Defence be duly registered.

Unfortunately, much remains to be done. Month after month, year after year, we have called on the Bosnian authorities to resolve the internal conflicts that are hindering their country from progressing towards the prospects we offer. Unfortunately, judging from the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/235) and the tone and substance of the briefing we have just heard, we are still far from that point.

In 10 days, a Western Balkan summit will take place in Sarajevo, 10 years after the Zagreb summit, which enshrined the prospects of European membership for all the countries of the region. However, the international community has had a massive presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 10 years and helped to rebuild its institutions. Objectives and conditions have been set to seek a transition that would allow the Bosnian authorities themselves to decide the fate of their country. The European Union and the United States have made a commitment to a process to facilitate negotiations among the Bosnian leaders and to help them to meet the conditions set and to implement limited constitutional reform.

To our regret, the country's political leaders, in particular those of Republika Srpska, have not seized this opportunity. On the contrary, they have stepped up their attacks on the international community which is trying to stabilize the country. Such attacks are intolerable on the part of the leaders seeking to get their country into the European Union and NATO. We call on all leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to adopt an attitude worthy of the larger interests of their country, especially in the run-up to the October elections. It is high time that the interests of their citizens be taken into account and that the latter no longer be held hostage to an outdated political game.

We welcome the gestures made in the region in recent months, showing that dialogue and reconciliation have a place in the Balkans and that the regional cooperation sought by the European Union is not a pipedream. Once again, we call on the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement such initiatives at the national level and to finally engage in a positive process that will confirm Bosnia and Herzegovina's European perspective. The international community cannot resolve the problems of Bosnia and Herzegovina on behalf of its leaders and people. The fate of their country depends on them alone. It is up to them to understand that an honest compromise is better than outmoded rhetoric or sterile intransigence. It is up to them to exhibit the courage to resolve their problems.

Mr. Onemola (Nigeria): I welcome His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thank him for his statement. I thank High Representative Valentin Inzko for his briefing on developments in the country during the past six months.

Nigeria welcomes the positive developments, including the progress made in addressing the conditions for visa liberalization with the European Union, as well as the acceptance of Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for a Membership Action Plan by NATO. We are pleased with the improved relations between the country and its immediate neighbours, resulting in increased diplomatic activity among them, as well as the furtherance of reconciliation and the promotion of peace within the region.

We note that attacks against State institutions and nationalistic rhetoric undermine efforts to promote peace and stability. Such actions have also constrained efforts by the High Representative and the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council to fully implement their mandates. The limited progress made in implementing necessary reforms and in meeting the outstanding requirements set by the Steering Board for the transition from the Office of the High Representative to a European Union presence requires attention. The General Framework Agreement for Peace needs sustained support.

If these issues are not handled properly, they could trigger further tension and possibly affect the general election slated for October. The leaders must demonstrate the requisite political will to promote reconciliation, peace and development in the country and the region as a whole. In this regard, we urge political leaders to refrain from divisive and

anti-Dayton rhetoric, as this may impede the progress recorded thus far. They should also commit to dialogue and compromise in resolving their differences.

We welcome the efforts of the United States and the European Union to assist the country in resolving the remaining issues on the agenda set by the Peace Implementation Council for the closure of the Office of the High Representative and in reforming the Constitution within the framework of the Dayton Agreement. We also welcome the follow-up meeting being facilitated by the United States in June.

We note the call by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for constitutional reform, and the Sejdic-Finci decision on the election eligibility provisions of the Constitution. It is our hope that any envisaged process will take into account the specific circumstances and concerns of all the country's peoples. We appreciate the role of European Union peacekeeping, in collaboration with the armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in fostering stability and security in the country. We urge the High Representative to continue with his efforts to promote the admission of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the European Union.

In conclusion, we urge continued support for the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in its efforts to implement its justice sector reform strategy, to promote the return of internally displaced persons, and to strengthen its economy. We call for concerted action by the international community to facilitate attainment of the goals of these reform efforts.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): It is an honour to welcome His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and I thank him for his statement. I also thank High Representative Valentin Inzko for his informative briefing.

As we mark the eighteenth anniversary of the admission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations, there are many more reasons for celebration. A safe and secure environment in the country continues. Progress has been made on many other fronts, such as the efforts towards Euro-Atlantic integration, the accession to the NATO Membership Action Plan, and important developments in the economic situation, despite enormous challenges. Also encouraging is the fact that the regional situation has improved and that Bosnia and Herzegovina's relations with its neighbours are developing constructively. The positive role the country is playing in the international community, as illustrated by its active membership in the Security Council, is also commendable. These developments show that unity and a sense of common purpose among leaders can bear fruit not only in key strategic spheres, but also in the form of benefits of direct and immediate interest to ordinary citizens.

We join others in expressing concern at statements and decisions made by political leaders in the entities, especially Republika Srpska, that are inconsistent with the Dayton Peace Agreement. Challenges to the authority of the Security Council, the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board and the High Representative must cease. Protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina is indispensable. The Security Council must continue to closely monitor the situation on the ground.

As the country prepares for the next general elections in October, nationalist and divisive rhetoric is particularly worrisome. We urge all parties to exercise maximum restraint in this regard. At the same time, efforts to strengthen the State at the national level should preserve the rights and prerogatives of all communal entities. This is an important issue that has to be addressed carefully. We therefore support initiatives, such as the Butmir process, that seek to engage the leadership of Bosnia and Herzegovina in this discussion. We hope that efforts in this regard can be sustained so that they bear fruit soon.

The strong message of unity, cooperation and peaceful coexistence that we all send today to Bosnia and Herzegovina's leaders is also valid for the Western Balkans as a whole. We congratulate the Serbian Parliament on the resolution adopted in March regarding the Srebrenica massacre of 1995. Although some might have preferred a different wording for it, the historic apology made by the Serbs represents a significant step towards reconciliation in the subregion. Also encouraging was the address delivered in Sarajevo by President Josipović on Croatia's policies during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The international community should continue to help Bosnia and Herzegovina find ways to overcome political difficulties and strike the appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization. We are certain that the country, with our continued support, will succeed in consolidating a fully functional and

self-sustaining State. This is the only way to the future of peace and prosperity that all in Bosnia and Herzegovina wish for and rightfully deserve.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I too would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to thank him for his informative briefing. I would also like to thank Mr. Valentin Inzko, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the quality of the presentation of his third report (S/2010/235) on the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in that country. Gabon takes this opportunity to commend him highly for his ongoing efforts to effectively implement the Dayton Peace Agreement.

As noted in the report, significant progress has been made in several areas, including the construction of infrastructure, visa liberalization with the European Union, and Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress towards membership of NATO. To these advances we must also add the status of non-permanent member of the Security Council, to which Bosnia and Herzegovina is making a very significant contribution. This represents the manifest recognition of the international community of the efforts being deployed by the authorities of the country to improve its future in the political, institutional, economic and security sectors.

Although we welcome the achievement of these steps, we are concerned about the various stumbling blocks that continue to hinder the full implementation of the Peace Agreement. The delay in setting up the Office of the Special Representative of the European Union, for example, has hindered the attainment of some goals of the Agreement and the candidacy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the European Union.

A few months from the holding of general elections in October 2010, it is very important that the parties respect the obligations that they voluntary undertook when they signed the Peace Agreement. In this respect, we would encourage them to cooperate fully with those involved in implementing the Peace Agreement, including the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. To that end, we welcome the decision taken by NATO to maintain its presence in this country in order to continue to contribute to the effectiveness of the Peace Agreement, with the reassuring cooperation of the military mission of the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My country remains committed to the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina and praises the efforts of the authorities of that country to launch a national dialogue and reconcile with its neighbours. I would therefore urge them to continue along this path and to remain committed to the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): At the outset, let me warmly welcome Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thank him for his important contribution.

I should also like to welcome the High Representative, my friend and countryman Mr. Valentin Inzko. We would like to thank him for the report he submitted to the Council (see S/2010/235). We fully share his assessment of recent developments and the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We would like to reaffirm our full and continued support for him and his Office, as well as for the efforts that he has been undertaking to fully implement the Dayton Accords and to facilitate reform. High Representative Inzko recalled the contribution my country was able to make on this Council in 1992. Eighteen years later, as partners and neighbours of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at this very Council table we look back to that contribution with great satisfaction.

We would like to align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the delegation of the European Union (EU), but I should also like to make the following additional points.

We congratulate Bosnia and Herzegovina on its progress on the path towards Euro-Atlantic integration. In its assessment, the European Commission has attested that Bosnia and Herzegovina meets most of the benchmarks set out in the visa road map. We are also encouraged by the fact that, in Tallinn on 22 and 23 April, NATO foreign ministers offered Bosnia and Herzegovina a Membership Action Plan, and we hope that the condition to find an appropriate solution regarding immovable defence property will be fulfilled in due course.

We are pleased by the genuine commitment shown in recent weeks and months to achieving regional reconciliation. Both the adoption by the Serbian Parliament of a resolution on 31 March

condemning the massacres in Srebrenica and offering apologies to the families and relatives of the victims and the visits of the Presidents of Serbia and Croatia have clearly added to the stability of the entire Western Balkans region. We believe that Chairman Silajdžić's own forthcoming visit to Belgrade will provide another opportunity to substantially improve regional cooperation.

Unfortunately, progress on other important and long-overdue reforms has been slow and has in many cases stalled completely. We are very concerned by the fact that this lack of progress is mostly due to deliberate obstruction directed against the functioning of the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Fulfilment of the five objectives and two conditions for the closure of the Office of the High Representative, the implementation of the recent rulings of the European Court of Human Rights and the adoption of a census law applicable to the entire State are prerequisites for the proper functioning of the State. We also hope to see progress on constitutional reforms after the elections on 3 October. These reforms will increase efficiency, help Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement the reforms necessary for accession to the European Union and thereby contribute to stability and economic growth, to the benefit of the entire population of the country.

We appeal to all political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina to refrain from the use of divisive and nationalistic rhetoric in the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. We are particularly concerned by the increase in the number of legal and political actions that have been directed against State institutions, competencies and laws, as well as challenges to the authority of the High Representative, including the adoption of a law by the National Assembly of Republika Srpska on the potential holding of a referendum. In this respect, it is particularly worrying that political leaders of Republika Srpska have repeatedly questioned the sovereignty and sustainability of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That is not acceptable.

Against the background of the global financial crisis, the upcoming elections will be a crucial opportunity to provide the population with serious choices pertaining to necessary economic and social reforms. We agree with the assessment of the High Representative that the European Union-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina still plays a key role in contributing to a safe and secure environment that helps the Office of the High Representative and other international actors to implement their mandates. This assessment is also reflected in the conclusions of the European Union Foreign Affairs Council on 25 January and by resolution 1895 (2009). Austria will maintain its commitment as one of the core troop contributors to that operation.

Finally, let me reiterate our firm conviction that the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the entire region lies within the European Union. That is by far the best way to create a broad zone of stability in the Balkans. This message was again confirmed at a high-level expert seminar that the Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger hosted in Vienna on 12 May. Experts from the Western Balkans and the European Union addressed the current political, economic and social challenges of the Western Balkans with a view to EU integration. We hope that these discussions and the resulting recommendations will contribute in a positive fashion to the debate on the future enlargement of the European Union that will be an important part of the upcoming EU-Western Balkans summit in Sarajevo on 2 June.

Mr. Çorman (Turkey): Let me begin by welcoming His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has come to New York right after his visit to Istanbul, where he attended the Somalia Conference. Let me extend once again the gratitude of my authorities for his participation and most valuable contributions.

I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely congratulate President Silajdžić on the election of his country to the Security Council. The presence of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Council is a clear sign of the confidence that the international community has entrusted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Turkey feels privileged to share this historic occasion with that country.

We are also pleased to see High Representative Valentin Inzko among us again. I want to thank him for his unrelenting efforts and leadership, as well as for introducing the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/235) and the succinct briefing he provided today.

As a Balkan country itself, Turkey attaches great importance to achieving lasting peace and stability in

the region. We consider a sovereign, democratic, and stable and functional State of Bosnia and Herzegovina in its internationally recognized borders to be an undeniable prerequisite to this objective. That is why, in addition to our excellent bilateral relations and as underlined in the briefing of the High Representative, Turkey continues to make every effort to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in its endeavours to promote regional cooperation. Indeed, regional ownership and inclusiveness should also be key elements in our quest for peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this context, the Turkish initiatives of holding high-level trilateral meetings among Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, as well as among Turkey, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, have surely contributed to the enhancement of regional understanding and collaboration. The Istanbul Declaration signed on 24 April 2010 by the Presidents of Turkey, Serbia and Mr. Silajdžić himself is an important step in this direction. It will not only strengthen the bilateral relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia but will also help create an environment conducive to regional dialogue and cooperation. We understand that Mr. Silajdžić will now be travelling to Belgrade, after his visit to New York. We very much welcome that initiative and congratulate Mr. Silajdžić on his leadership in thus continuing the positive momentum created between the two countries.

We also thank His Excellency High Representative Valentin Inzko for his generous words of recognition and praise concerning Turkey's sincere efforts. We express our resolute intention to continue them with the same determination.

We are glad to see that, since the conflicts of the 1990s, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made considerable progress. Of course, there are still daunting challenges ahead, and progress has not been as swift as we all expected. But, given its turbulent past, Bosnia and Herzegovina is certainly making important strides in the right direction. In that regard, cognizant of the fact that the future of the region is closely tied to that of Europe as a whole, we firmly support the aspiration of Bosnia and Herzegovina to fully integrate with the Euro-Atlantic institutions, and we hope that those institutions will also embrace Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In that frame of mind, we greatly welcome the decision taken at the NATO ministerial meeting, in Tallinn, on 22 April 2010, accepting the application of Bosnia and Herzegovina to join the Membership Action Plan. We are hopeful that the condition put forward for that step will soon be met, so that Bosnia and Herzegovina can start to benefit from enhanced cooperation with NATO members. Bosnia and Herzegovina should be further assisted in that direction.

At the same time, we appreciate the progress achieved in addressing the conditions for visa liberalization with the European Union. Again, we hope that the remaining technicalities will soon be resolved, and that Bosnia and Herzegovina will enjoy the same status as its regional neighbours. In that regard, Turkey supports and appreciates the efforts of the European Union to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina to take its rightful place in the European family of nations, including by providing stability with its Police Mission and through Operation Althea. As an active contributor to both of those missions, Turkey will remain ready to continue and increase its contributions.

Having said that, and as I have already suggested, we cannot help but share the concerns of Mr. Inzko about several aspects of the domestic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular with respect to anti-Dayton rhetoric and actions that challenge the sovereignty and constitutional order of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The report of the High Representative depicts those issues in great detail, and we agree in general with the High Representative's observations.

Let me also underscore that we firmly support the High Representative in using the powers granted to him, in order to lead Bosnia and Herzegovina to a better future. Hence, we do not agree that the actions of the High Representative are unlawful and reject the challenges to the authority of the international community and that of the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board. In particular, the new law on referendum adopted by the Republika Srpska would be in clear violation of appropriate legislation and valid international legal mechanisms, and is therefore unacceptable.

In the run-up to the general elections scheduled for October, to whose free and fair conduct we attach utmost importance, we want to see all parties embrace a common vision and act in accordance with it, rather than pursuing parochial ethnic interests. Thus, we reject all secessionist intentions, support the democratic forces in the country and remain hopeful

that the democratic ideals and aspirations of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina will eventually overcome divisive tendencies.

Let me conclude by stating once again that the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Euro-Atlantic structures will eliminate any feelings of exclusion, instil confidence in the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina and ensure the country's future as a strong, stable, secure and full-fledged European country. Turkey is fully committed to that objective, and we will do everything possible to assist the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina to achieve their rightful place in the international community.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I too would like to welcome among us Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Mr. Valentin Inzko, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina and European Union Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to thank them for their statements.

The delegation of Mexico welcomes the active participation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an elected member of the Security Council. This demonstrates the progress that the country has made over the past several years. Bosnia and Herzegovina's strategic rapprochement vis-à-vis the European Union and the development of more fluid cooperative relations with its neighbours are important steps forward in consolidating the country's role on the international stage and in promoting stability in the Balkans. Yet these positive international developments should be accompanied by improved political understanding in the domestic arena. To bring lasting peace and stability to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the country's various political forces must intensify their dialogue and understanding and must demonstrate political will to make genuine progress on pending aspects of the peace process.

That is why we regret the extreme divisionist and nationalist rhetoric of one of the parties, along with its attempts to challenge the activities and mandate of the High Representative and Special Representative of the European Union. We reiterate our call to all political actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina to redouble their efforts to meet outstanding commitments, such as those relating to refugees and displaced persons, State property and security sector reform. We also call on them to keep open the path of negotiation and dialogue in order to narrow their differences and avoid action that could endanger the country's stability, in particular with a view to the general election to be held in October.

We consider that the presence of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR) continues to be necessary to guarantee the country's security through its support for the Office of the High Representative and other international entities in fulfilling their mandates, and by providing training and assistance to the country's security forces. The international community should continue to support the efforts of the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to strengthen the rule of law.

We regret that, yet again, it has not been possible to achieve the political consensus necessary to implement the provisions of annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement, which provides for the establishment of a comprehensive strategy on the return of refugees and displaced persons. That is why we call once again on State authorities to take stronger action to implement the National War Crimes Prosecution Strategy, the National Justice Sector Reform Strategy and the package of constitutional reforms. We must ensure that the legal framework is compatible with the country's international human rights obligations with respect to equality before the law and non-discrimination.

In that respect, we hope that efforts to compile information on war crimes not yet in the central database, the investigations concerning the 1,381 cases already presented to the Office of the Chief Prosecutor, and the broadening of legal cooperation agreements with other countries of the region will soon yield results that will make it possible to fight impunity and make progress in the national reconciliation process. All those efforts should include greater cooperation by all States in the region with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

I should like to conclude by reiterating Mexico's support for the work of the High Representative. We hope that Bosnia and Herzegovina will succeed in permanently overcoming differences and consolidating a multi-ethnic democratic State in which its citizens can, along with all the citizens of the Balkan region, enjoy a more stable and prosperous future as an integral part of Europe.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have listened carefully to the assessment of the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina by Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of that country. Unfortunately, that assessment was unilateral and unconstructive.

We thank Mr. Valentin Inzko, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, for his introduction to the Council of the report on developments in that country (S/2010/235, annex, enclosure). We cannot recognize that document as objective and balanced. Consistent with the negative practices used in preparing it, the report suffers from overt anti-Serbian excesses.

Republika Srpska is being held responsible for the difficult pre-election political atmosphere in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the destructive role of Federation politicians is being hushed up. Nor has there been proper focus on Federation politicians who have blocked the consideration of Republika Srpska's compromise constitutional amendments, which were designed to alleviate the concerns expressed by the European Court of Human Rights in its 2009 verdict. The report's criticism of the law on referendum recently adopted in Republika Srpska sidesteps the fact that its sphere of application is limited to the jurisdiction of that entity.

In spite of a certain increase in the temperature of political rhetoric in the unfolding campaign leading up to the general election scheduled for 3 October, the overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina could be deemed satisfactory. In a number of areas, local authorities have been able to achieve decent results.

With regard to the report's defence of constitutional changes in Bosnia, we should take the position that the major role in such processes belongs to local political figures and that these reforms should be implemented solely with the consent of all Bosnian parties, as called for in the Dayton Constitution. We agree with colleagues who have today noted how important it is for Bosnian parties to achieve that type of agreement. The role of the international community is to assist in reaching compromise, not to impose quick fixes.

We believe it important to make further efforts to promptly attain the goals and conditions agreed upon by the Peace Implementation Council Steering Board, which are designed to bring about conditions for drawing down the Office of the High Representative and converting it into a mission of the European Union Special Representative.

With regard to the final unresolved question of the division of State property among various levels of authority, it is essential to rely on the Steering Board's agreed territorial and functional approach, which provides for transfer to the pan-Bosnian level of sites for State agencies. Entity bodies would then exercise all remaining relevant powers.

With regard to the High Representative's emergency mechanisms, especially the so-called Bonn powers, we believe that the sphere of their application is limited to the areas of ensuring the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of compliance with the Dayton Peace Agreement — and here I might observe that the question of violations of Dayton has not been noted for a number of years. In our view, it is unacceptable to use those tools for short-term political purposes, especially to resolve economic disputes.

Russia is prepared to work together with partners to continue to provide Bosnia and Herzegovina with all possible support in building a modern democratic State on the basis of the Dayton Peace Agreement. We believe that the upcoming elections will be an important step in that direction, confirming Bosnia's ability to address the challenges before it. For our part, we will continue to interact constructively with the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Security Council.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I too would like to join other Security Council colleagues in welcoming to the Council Chamber today His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Mr. Valentin Inzko, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. I would also like to thank the High Representative for his comprehensive, balanced and sobering report on developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina over the past six months (S/2010/235, annex, enclosure). The United Kingdom fully supports and appreciates the High Representative's efforts to uphold the Dayton Agreement and to facilitate the reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The United Kingdom supports European Union (EU) enlargement to all the countries of the Western Balkans. EU integration is crucial to entrench stability

there. We are concerned that, while some countries in the region have made significant progress over the past year, Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be held back by political deadlock. We do not want to see Bosnia and Herzegovina fall behind the rest of the region.

Like the High Representative, the United Kingdom welcomes recent positive steps on regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. The Serbian parliamentary resolution condemning the Srebrenica massacre was a welcome step towards greater reconciliation in the region. Serbia, Turkey and Bosnia and Herzegovina have sought to improve their relations through the Istanbul Declaration. We urge Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue to respond positively to such initiatives. We look forward to the forthcoming high-level Sarajevo meeting on advancing regional cooperation.

We share the serious concern set out in the High Representative's report about the internal political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina over the past six months. In particular, we regret the lack of political will to deliver progress on key reforms and the challenges to the Dayton Agreement and to the High Representative's authority. The United Kingdom fully supports all the decisions taken by the High Representative during the reporting period. We are concerned about plans for a referendum in the Republika Srpska entity challenging the legitimacy of the High Representative's decisions. All actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina need to be clear that the international community, including the Security Council, is fully committed to the country's territorial integrity and to the framework established by the Dayton Agreement.

The European Union has made clear that a membership application from Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be considered while the Office of the High Representative remains in place. It is therefore essential that Bosnian leaders work constructively together to deliver the remaining objectives and conditions, which remain necessary for the transition of the Office of the High Representative to take place.

Furthermore, the European Union has been clear that constitutional reform is required in order to create a functional State. Central Government in Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to be effective enough to meet the responsibilities of EU and NATO membership. The European Court of Human Rights ruling on minority rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina underlines that wider need for constitutional reform. Progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina on delivering the necessary reforms for European visa liberalization demonstrates what can be achieved when the political will exists.

The High Representative's report highlights the economic difficulties faced by Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is important, therefore, that the relevant authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina meet their obligations under agreements with international financial institutions, particularly the International Monetary Fund. This requires the necessary legislation not only to be enacted, but also promptly and efficiently to be implemented.

The United Kingdom welcomes the decision taken by NATO foreign ministers to conditionally offer Bosnia and Herzegovina a Membership Action Plan. This is a strong signal of NATO's commitment to stability and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnian leaders now need to focus urgently on delivering the one final condition by resolving the issue of defence property. Unless this issue is resolved, the recent positive decision on the Membership Action Plan cannot be progressed further.

We agree with the High Representative's assessment of the ongoing importance of the role played by the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina in underpinning stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bosnia and Herzegovina for its contribution to the work of the Security Council so far this year. We look forward to continuing to work closely with that country for the remainder of its time on the Security Council.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank you, Sir, for having convened today's meeting. We also thank the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Inzko, for his briefing and for his efforts to achieve progress in the political process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I welcome the presence at today's meeting of the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Haris Silajdžić, and thank him for his statement.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has remained generally stable of late. Reforms in the area of the Constitution, the rule of law and national defence have contributed to some progress. Preparations are under way for the general elections scheduled for October, and economic reform has achieved some results.

At the same time, Bosnia and Herzegovina is confronting challenges that merit the due attention of all parties. These challenges have been exacerbated by attempts to hinder the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, which threaten to undermine State sovereignty and authority, as well as existing legislation. The integrity of the State is under threat.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, economic development has slowed, hampered by the international economic crisis, while social problems have been exacerbated, which is a cause of concern. China respects the independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the right of its various ethnic groups to choose their own paths to development. We sincerely hope that all parties concerned in Bosnia and Herzegovina will strive to implement the Dayton Peace Agreement and work actively for dialogue to strengthen the political and reconciliation process, to ensure the success of the general elections to be held in October, to achieve further progress in the political and economic areas, and to bring peace, stability and prosperity to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the entire Balkan region.

We support the efforts of the international community to strengthen its mediation with a view to attaining high-level dialogue and concrete results. We hope that the International Monetary Fund will duly address the dire consequences of the economic and political situation in the region and pursue vigorous measures to improve it.

China welcomes the intention of the European Union (EU) to continue to play an active role in maintaining security and stability and promoting socio-economic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The EU Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina has begun to extend military assistance to the Bosnian army, which will help to safeguard State sovereignty. China and Bosnia and Herzegovina share a long-standing friendship and have seen their relations thrive. Mr. Nikola Špirić, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, recently concluded a successful visit to China, and we are doing our utmost, alongside the international community, to contribute to sustainable peace and development in his country.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Lebanon.

At the outset, I wish to thank His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić for his statement. Our thanks go also to High Representative Inzko for his comprehensive briefing. We commend his efforts to promote the political process and assure him of our full support.

We support Bosnia and Herzegovina in its endeavours to meet the objectives and conditions of the Dayton Peace Agreement and the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council, which will ultimately lead to the closure of the Office of the High Representative. We support Bosnia and Herzegovina as it embarks on a path that will lead to stability and prosperity. The country has seen positive developments, in particular with regard to meeting the conditions set by the European Union for visa liberalization and to relations with its neighbours.

We also believe that the issues of State property, filling key public positions and the return of refugees and internally displaced persons should be resolved. That will require serious dialogue with a view to achieving genuine reconciliation and cooperation that will allow the State to perform its functions. Any diversion from those principles will have a negative impact on all parties, irrespective of their political orientation and position, and on the economic situation and livelihoods of Bosnia's citizens.

In the light of the elections to be held in October, we call on all actors to exercise restraint and to refrain from engaging in inflammatory rhetoric that focuses on narrow ethnic interests and magnifies divisions. With regard to the escalation of rhetoric attacking State institutions, we stress the importance of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are concerned over any attack on the Balkans, and on Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular.

In closing, we commend the positive environment prevailing in the region and welcome the announcement by Croatia and Serbia of their support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia

and Herzegovina. We commend Turkey for its role in conducting tripartite talks among Bosnia and Herzegovina and its two neighbours. This initiative will strengthen stability and good-neighbourly relations. We cherish the hope that Bosnia and Herzegovina will enjoy a future of security and prosperity.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Vilović (Croatia): At the outset, allow me to welcome His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. My delegation is particularly pleased that his country is participating in this debate for the first time as a member of the Security Council.

We also welcome Mr. Valentin Inzko, High Representative and European Union (EU) Special Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and thank him for his briefing. The report he presented introduced (S/2010/235) reflects the challenges and complexities of the situation. I would also like to reaffirm Croatia's full and continued support for him and his Office, and to express our appreciation for the personal effort he invests in carrying out his mission.

Croatia aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the European Union in a few minutes. Here, I wish to make some additional comments.

Croatia strongly supports the clear and unambiguous European and Euro-Atlantic perspective of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Our support for and commitment to the European perspective for Bosnia and Herzegovina, as for all the countries of South-East Europe, was formalized in the delivery of our translation of the EU acquis communautaire to the prime ministers at the Croatian-Slovenian regional conference in Brdo, near Kranj, in March this year. We believe that membership in the European Union is the future of all countries of South-East Europe as the most suitable framework for their overall development. We also warmly welcomed the recent invitation extended by NATO to Bosnia and Herzegovina to join its Membership Action Plan, a step that Croatia strongly and actively supported.

For Croatia, the territorial integrity, sovereignty and equality of the three constituent peoples are the basic preconditions for the country's stability and sustainability. Assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina in reaching sustainable stability and functionality is one of our regional priorities.

As we just heard, the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina have made significant progress in the area of visa liberalization requirements. Croatia is strongly convinced that this progress should be recognized and hopes to see visa liberalization implemented in the course of this year. The citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina deserve the same privileges as the citizens of other countries of the region. Any delay would only benefit those advocating the status quo, and the peoples and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina would continue to bear the consequences beyond their direct responsibilities.

The stability, security and progress of South-East Europe are in Croatia's strategic interest. We firmly support all the countries of the region in their reforms, and we offer them our assistance and experience on their EU and NATO integration paths. Following the success of the Zagreb summit, we believe that the time is ripe to re-energize the process. Thus, we look forward to the upcoming conference to be held in Sarajevo on 2 June — marking the tenth anniversary of the Zagreb summit and bringing together ministers of foreign affairs of the EU and the region — as an additional impetus for Bosnia and Herzegovina to continue more energetically with the necessary reforms and to further its efforts towards Euro-Atlantic integration.

However, Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to face considerable problems, some of which are challenging its very foundations as established by the Dayton Peace Agreement. Regrettably, we have heard that in most other areas only limited progress has been noted and that some serious challenges have been raised by the authorities of Republika Srpska to State institutions and their functioning, as well as to the authority of the High Representative. Croatia urges the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to find strength and reach compromise on issues key to a sustainable future for the country, its peoples and citizens. There will be no progress without consensus — which has to come from within — and which Croatia, together with other friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina, strongly advocates.

Croatia calls for negotiations on constitutional reform to be continued as soon as the new authorities are formed after the October elections. Further delays on constitutional reform could have long-term consequences for the country's future, constitutional reform being a key precondition for successful Euro-Atlantic integration. Croatia advocates constitutional amendments that would provide full equality for all constituent peoples, as well as for all citizens, applied throughout the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this process, the political views of the representatives of the three constituent peoples should be valued equally, as the country's stability depends on respect for the constitutional principle of the collective equality of all three constituent peoples — Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats — and all citizens. We have stated on several occasions that there cannot be a Bosnia and Herzegovina without Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their political and cultural survival is vital to the continued existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as these two elements are closely intertwined. Given the singular position of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the smallest and most vulnerable group, it is all the more important that their voice be considered on a basis of equality, both ethnic and civic, as guaranteed in the Constitution and as arising from the history of the country. All three peoples must feel that Bosnia and Herzegovina is their country, and they should feel safe and protected throughout its entire territory. Their fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as their civic and ethnic rights, should be protected throughout, and their right guaranteed to return safe and protected to their pre-war homes.

The fight against impunity for war crimes is yet another important factor in the normalization of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Croatia firmly believes that the mandate of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia cannot be declared complete without bringing to justice the two remaining fugitives, Ratko Mladic and Goran Hadzic, indicted for the most atrocious crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia. It is also important that, at the same time, national courts fulfil their lasting responsibility and address other war crime cases.

In such circumstances, Croatia believes that it would be premature to begin the closure of the Office of the High Representative this year. In this regard, Croatia is concerned by the general sense of fatigue in the international community and believes that a strong international commitment is still very much needed in order to help improve conditions that will move the current situation forward and help remedy the remaining fundamental problems.

Before closing, I would like to reiterate that Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina enjoy a very close, friendly and cordial relationship on many levels. Strong Croatian support has been duly recognized by Bosnia and Herzegovina and is manifested by our intense and frequent communication at the highest level, underscored by a number of visits exchanged. As noted in the High Representative's report, over the past months both President Josipović and Prime Minister Kosor visited Sarajevo, while the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina visited Zagreb. The Government of Croatia and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina are preparing a joint session, which should take place next month. We therefore believe that the observation made in paragraph 20 of the High Representative's report, implying strained political relations, is surely inadvertently imprecise.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I give the floor to the representative of Serbia.

Mr. Starčević (Serbia) I would like first of all to welcome Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Mr. Valentin Inzko, High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The delegation of Serbia has studied the thirty-seventh report on the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement (S/2010/235) and listened to the views expressed in the Council today with keen interest. As a signatory and guarantor of the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and pursuant to resolution 1031 (1995), Serbia is consistently and firmly committed to full respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Proceeding from the strategic foreign policy priorities and commitments of the Republic of Serbia to the promotion of relations with neighbouring countries, I would like to confirm once again the support of my country for the integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and our readiness for close cooperation in all areas of mutual interest, particularly in building peace, stability

and prosperity in the Balkans and in furthering our common goal of joining the European Union (EU).

As a country committed to maintaining good-neighbourly relations, Serbia is a staunch advocate of the lasting stabilization of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will respect every agreement reached by consent of the two entities and by consensus among the three constituent peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina containing sustainable solutions that are in the spirit of modern democratic values. We encourage all participants in this process to do everything that is necessary to achieving such an agreement. Similarly, it is by upholding the principle of consensus — two plus three — that Serbia views the ongoing process of transfer of competences from the Office of the High Representative to the EU Special Representative.

Guided by its resolve to help achieve complete normalization and foster a new quality of relations, Serbia has taken important steps towards full national reconciliation. The declaration on Srebrenica adopted by the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia is a clear signal of the support of my country to Bosnia and Herzegovina and of our readiness to confront the past and take political responsibility for the future and well-being of the region.

The Declaration adopted at the Istanbul summit by the Presidents of Serbia and Turkey and the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the results of the trilateral meetings of the Foreign Ministers of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey held thus far have made an important contribution and given impetus to the promotion of good-neighbourly relations, better regional cooperation and a common European future.

Serbia views the development of its relations with Republika Srpska on the basis of the Agreement on Special Parallel Relations to be within the context of its efforts to strengthen overall relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. I wish also to point out that my country supports the continuation of negotiations and concrete work on the resolution of border issues between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia.

Serbia supports Bosnia and Herzegovina on its road to the European Union and strongly advocates its inclusion in the EU decision on visa regime liberalization. Serbia expects that the EU-Western Balkans conference, to be held in Sarajevo on 2 June, will encourage the EU commitment to continuing the process of enlargement.

Serbia continues to believe that bilateral and intra-regional economic cooperation provides a special impetus to the lasting stabilization of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as of the entire region of South-East Europe and the Western Balkans. For its part, Serbia stands ready to cooperate fully in this regard.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Pedro Serrano, acting head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Serrano: I wish to thank you, Sir, for having invited the European Union (EU) to today's important meeting.

The candidate countries Turkey and Croatia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Montenegro; as well as the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

I wish to thank High Representative Inzko for his presentation and reiterate the full support of the EU for his Office and actions. We have also listened carefully to President Silajdžić's important statement, and I wish to express my gratitude for the cooperation and support Bosnia and Herzegovina has extended to the European Union during its membership in the Security Council.

As the High Representative has reported, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made some progress in recent months in advancing its European and Euro-Atlantic perspectives. We commend these developments and encourage further efforts. It is also encouraging that regional cooperation in the Western Balkans has continued to develop positively, with renewed constructive engagement from Serbia and Croatia and with Turkey playing a useful role. We look forward to the momentum that will be generated by the EU-Western Balkans ministerial meeting in Sarajevo on 2 June. But as the High Representative has pointed out, the overall political climate in Bosnia and Herzegovina has continued to be negative.

Unhelpful rhetoric has increased in the run-up to the elections scheduled for 3 October. It remains a matter of great concern that the authority of State institutions and competencies and the authority of the High Representative have been increasingly challenged over the past six months. The adoption of a new law on

referendums by Republika Srpska may be particularly worrying should it be used to challenge the existing constitutional framework. The European Union wishes to reiterate its strong support for High Representative Inzko and calls on all parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina to comply fully with the decisions taken by him and not to seek to challenge his authority. We underline once again our firm commitment to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Against this backdrop, we encourage all political leaders to work for the long-term interests of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consensus is urgently needed to achieve political reforms and to tackle significant economic and social challenges.

The European Union is firmly committed to and fully engaged in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The European Union is using all instruments at its disposal, including by providing significant financial assistance and expertise. The Lisbon Treaty gives us new impetus and new possibilities for an enhanced political presence in the country in the future. Through our two missions on the ground, the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR ALTHEA) and the European Union Police Mission, the European Union supports Bosnia and Herzegovina's efforts to maintain a safe and secure environment.

The European Union is committed to continuing the executive mandate of EUFOR ALTHEA in accordance with resolution 1895 (2009). Should the situation require it, the EU stands ready to maintain an executive military role to support these efforts beyond 2010, under a United Nations mandate. Building on its achievements, the operation has started to provide non-executive capacity-building and training support, thus contributing to strengthening local ownership and capacity. The EU Police Mission mandate has also been extended until the end of 2011, with a specific focus on fighting organized crime and corruption and on enhancing cooperation among police, prosecutors and the penitentiary system.

We firmly believe that the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina indeed lies within the European Union. We are encouraged that, when there is political dialogue and consensus, the country can achieve reforms. Visa liberalization is a concrete example. As a result of Bosnia and Herzegovina's good progress in meeting the benchmarks, the European Commission is working on a proposal for updating the Schengen white list, on which the Council and the European Parliament will decide together in the coming months.

Such positive political will also needs to be demonstrated in other areas to ensure that Bosnia and Herzegovina does not fall behind the rest of the region in its European integration process. As High Representative Ashton noted in her address to the Security Council on 4 May (see S/PV.6306), steps remain to be taken by Bosnia and Herzegovina to secure a well-functioning State. In particular, additional efforts are needed in order to meet the outstanding requirements - five objectives and two conditions - for the closure of the Office of the High Representative, notably regarding State and defence property. The European Union has been clear that it will not be in a position to consider an application for membership by Bosnia and Herzegovina until the transition of the Office of the High Representative to a reinforced EU presence has been decided.

Progress is also needed on constitutional reform to enable the better functioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina institutions, as well as to implement the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights on the rights of minorities to stand for election and be appointed to important State-level institutions. The law on census should be adopted without further delay. The European Union continues to attach importance to a full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

In his report, the High Representative has set out some urgent and pressing reform priorities for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Many of these are essential if Bosnia and Herzegovina is to realize its ambition of EU accession. Without them, Bosnia and Herzegovina compromises its strategic priority and risks falling further behind other countries in the region as regards the European integration process. We cannot afford to waste time. It is the responsibility of the Bosnia and Herzegovina leadership to move ahead rapidly and constructively, and to do so as soon as possible.

As high-level visits by High Representative Ashton and Commissioner Füle have shown, the European Union remains fully committed to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and will remain so after the eventual closure of the Office of the High Representative. In turn, we encourage all of Bosnia and Herzegovina's political leaders to be committed to the European

Union and to act in support of Bosnia and Herzegovina's European aspirations.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Haris Silajdžić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to make a further statement.

Mr. Silajdžić: Let me thank the representatives of the countries now members of the Security Council for their valuable contributions, comments and views, which my country will certainly take into consideration, especially since, as I have said, I came here today because I believe that the basic law of Bosnia and Herzegovina — the Dayton Peace Agreement and especially its pillars such as the Constitution and its article I — is being questioned right now, in particular on the issue of State property.

This is not about the property, per se, in Bosnia and Herzegovina; it is about the character of the State and the character of our Agreement. The Agreement, signed by all the countries present at Dayton, is that Bosnia and Herzegovina continues as a State under international law. So, we believe that maintaining the Dayton Agreement, as it is, is vital to peace and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Of course, the Dayton Agreement came at a great price for citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially Bosniaks and Croats. Tens of thousands were killed and hundreds of thousands remain to this day in the diaspora, ethnically cleansed. So that is why we will not allow anyone to question that to which all of us agreed in Dayton. It may appear to some that Bosnia and Herzegovina managed to prevail in Dayton by remaining a unified country. But I assure the Council that what I have described is a fact of life. And I am very sorry and regretful to have heard here that the representative of the Russian Federation viewed my speech as not constructive.

The Russian Government participated in the Dayton Agreement procedures, and they are a part of the process. The Russian Government agreed to and signed the Dayton Peace Agreement as a guarantor. I regret that the Russian Government continues uncritically to support only one ethnic group in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That is not a very good contribution to peace and stability and to maintaining the Dayton Agreement as the basic law for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Agreement ended genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina and brought peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it must be maintained.

Let me end on a personal note here, because High Representative Inzko reminded me of our beginnings. When Bosnia and Herzegovina was attacked, it is true that I, as the Foreign Minister, did not have a telephone here — not even a chair to sit on. At that time, Foreign Minister Mock and the Austrian Ambassador to the United Nations extended their help to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to our efforts to defend our country. For that I am grateful. And of course I am grateful also to all those who helped us during those difficult moments for our people and our State.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The representative of the Russian Federation wishes to make a further statement, and I give him the floor.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Of course, I was not planning to take the floor again, and I certainly do not wish now to become involved in a debate on the foundations of the divergent assessments of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or on the differing assessments of the factors hindering agreement among the Bosnian parties on pending problems. I do not think we need to do that during today's meeting. The positions of all external participants assisting the Bosnian settlement process are well known. My country's position in particular is well known.

Something on which we cannot fail to agree with Mr. Silajdžić is that the Dayton Agreements must be strictly and fully implemented by all parties. That is absolutely certain. And we have consistently been assisting to that end through our contacts and our relations with all the Bosnian parties. I will leave the assessment we heard from Mr. Silajdžić as a matter for his own conscience. I am absolutely certain that the ongoing efforts of the Russian Federation in support of full implementation of the Dayton Agreements and in support of the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina are well known.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently a member of the Security Council, and I will reaffirm what I have already said: that we will continue to constructively cooperate and interact with the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the entire range of items on the Council's agenda. This is an important and critical stage in establishing Bosnia and Herzegovina's statehood, and we are certain that Bosnia and

Herzegovina will successfully pass through this stage and will work successfully in the Security Council.

The Russian Federation is absolutely convinced also that we have every reason to believe that all parties and political actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina, on the firm basis of the Dayton Agreement, will resolve their disputes and achieve consensus on all pending issues for the effective establishment of a democratic Bosnian State, in the interest of strengthening stability and security in the country and throughout the Balkan region.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6320

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6320th meeting

Tuesday, 25 May 2010, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Long Zhou
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1883 (2009) (S/2010/240)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-37501 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1883 (2009) (S/2010/240)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Iraq, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ad Melkert, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Melkert to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of members to document S/2010/240, containing the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1883 (2009).

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Ad Melkert, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Melkert: The 7 March elections for Iraq's Council of Representatives marked a turning point for Iraq, as the results will determine the Government that is to oversee the withdrawal of United States forces in the course of 2010 and 2011 and govern Iraq during the next four years. This is an opportunity to further strengthen the country's sovereignty and to move with more determination towards reconciliation.

Still, there are reasons for serious concern. I regret to draw attention to the hard fact that a chilling number of violent incidents in the year 2010 so far have left over 2,000 Iraqis dead and 5,000 injured. Yesterday, newly elected member of parliament Bashar al-Aqidi was assassinated in a despicable act of crime. It is imperative that the international community condemn and isolate the perpetrators. That would be to the benefit of an orderly transition towards a new Government as a critical moment for creating a political environment conducive to meaningful dialogue and power-sharing.

Against this backdrop, I would like to share some observations and concerns.

Following the vote recount in Baghdad and the forthcoming ratification of the electoral results by the Federal Supreme Court, the first full election cycle in Iraq will be completed in a credible and successful way. It is difficult to overstate the importance of this milestone. It represents a firm rejection by the vast majority of the Iraqi people of the violent forces and their objectives.

Despite challenges often highlighted in the media, what I observed in the post-elections period was a genuine and shared understanding among all elected leaders that there is no alternative to respecting the constitutional basis for the transition to the next Government. This shared political attitude is key in assessing the ongoing process, including its time-consuming features. The latter reflect the absence of established procedures and customs, as well as characteristics of the parliamentary system, which is not unlike those of other countries of the world.

This is not to say that time does not matter, for the Iraqi voters expect to see the results of their votes, and destructive forces stand ready to derail progress. However, the crux is in the determination of political leaders, as well as of religious and civil society voices, to establish the country's future on a constitutional basis in an open and inclusive spirit.

As we speak, some signs are positive, others are less so. From various sides, a round table format has been suggested for the Government-formation process. We have advised key leaders to embark upon this without further delay.

In this context, it would be important for all to recognize that the constitutional system requires majority support for all Government positions and policy agreements. In Iraq's political system, the election result alone is not a direct guarantee of the choice of a Prime Minister. Hence the permanent effort by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to encourage the winning parties to meet and converge around agreements that, at this stage, could be guided by three principles: first, a Government coalition inclusive of all major winning lists; secondly, a Government based on power-sharing principles; and thirdly, a Government-formation process within a tentatively agreed time frame.

Agreeing to such principles could demonstrate commitment to a specific direction while allowing for more time for the complex process of consensus-building to unfold without creating a political vacuum. Democracy is not necessarily limited to the distinction between a majority in government and a minority in opposition. At this juncture, Iraq would probably be better served by a broadly inclusive Government as a radical alternative to the exclusion and disenfranchisement that many communities have experienced in the past.

Another major challenge ahead is the need to respond to high expectations that political and security progress will translate into economic growth and the creation of jobs, leading to a drastic improvement of living conditions. The list of infrastructure and services challenges is immense, with shortages everywhere, varying from schools and health-care centres to roads, sewers and electricity. In Iraq, life expectancy at birth is 58.2 years, as opposed to, for example, 73.6 years in Syria. The reintegration of internally displaced persons — many living in appalling conditions as squatters — and those refugees who want to return demands far more priority attention and resources.

The new Government can benefit from policy directions offered by the National Development Plan. Yet, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that reconstruction and reform have often been piecemeal, suffering at times from leadership and capacity gaps. It is also a concern that, in the current post-election phase, attention to the economic and social policy priorities seems virtually absent. Failure by the next Government to address the needs and aspirations of the population will predictably be a source of increasing instability and undermine the gains of the democratic process so far.

Let me say a few words on areas of United Nations action. The signing of the first United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) on 11 May marked a milestone towards longer-term economic and human development planning for Iraq, centring on the five national development priorities outlined in the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/240). Resource mobilization to enable United Nations agencies to play their part in implementing these priorities will be necessary, as will finding the right balance between increasing Iraqi contributions and ongoing commitment from Iraq's partners in the stage of crucial transition to long-term development assistance. Currently, the framework for a UNDAF trust fund is under preparation for discussion among all partners, with the aim to be operational by the beginning of 2011.

The need for a vote recount in Baghdad made it necessary for UNAMI to continue to dedicate additional attention and resources to election management support. The eventual confirmation of the initial count was a moment of deserved pride for all the United Nations staff who have tirelessly stood by the Independent High Electoral Commission in the delivery of an historic result. In the coming period, the United Nations election team will work closely with the United Nations country team to plan for future electoral events and to strengthen support for relevant constitutional and parliamentary processes, taking into account many valuable lessons learned.

Whilst the Government formation process is gradually evolving, there are opportunities to advance some of the key outstanding issues more than was possible in the pre-election period. This particularly concerns areas crucial to reconciliation that require action at different levels of engagement.

I am particularly pleased to report that UNAMI's impartial outreach, aimed at reconciliation between different communities and interests in the province of Ninewa, has generated a positive atmosphere and the

possibility of tangible results in the near future. Building on Deputy Prime Minister Issawi's initiative of last year, UNAMI is facilitating meetings between the Governorate of Ninewa and the Kurdistan Regional Government as a basis for progress in four specific areas: clarifying responsibilities and involvement in security policies for Ninewa; facilitating the release or transfer of Arab detainees held in the Kurdistan region; strengthening support for and protection of minorities that are suffering discrimination and attacks, including the disturbing recent attack on a bus with Christian students in Mosul; and ending the absence of representatives from the Kurdish Brotherhood List in the Ninewa Provincial Council and administration as a step towards normalizing relations within the Governorate.

I hope that these first signs of change in atmosphere and determination bode well for taking up the task to seriously address the outstanding issues concerning all so-called disputed areas. These still cast their shadow on the stability and future of Iraq. The time has come for all parties to come to terms around the relevant provisions of the Constitution. To this end, we are exploring the possibility of expanding the work of the high-level task force. Our advice to all parties will be to focus the expanded agenda on, in particular, principles guiding the management, development and revenue-sharing of oil production throughout Iraq, including the Kurdistan region and Kirkuk province; an approach to achieving consensus on the future arrangements concerning Kirkuk province; clarification of the relevant administrative roles and responsibilities with regard to disputed territories; and practical modalities for joint security arrangements ensuring long-term stability.

In many aspects, the effort to achieve reconciliation has a strong regional dimension. The future Government should reflect on building an internal and external consensus on a regional policy for Iraq. Security, stability and economic growth go hand in hand, and Iraq and its neighbours would be well served by capitalizing on the strengths of a region with so much more potential for progress than we have seen so far. Constructive engagement, rather than partisan interference, would be of great benefit to all. The United Nations should stand ready to facilitate bilateral and multilateral processes if requested. Importantly, hosting next year's summit of the League of Arab States in Baghdad will offer Iraq a unique opportunity to reinforce a positive agenda of regional engagement and cooperation.

Not least important in normalizing the position of Iraq within the region and the wider international community is the aim to exit Chapter VII as soon as possible, as are consensus opinion and hope among all parties in Iraq. I should not hide my concern that signs of ambivalence seem to stand in the way of advancing towards good-neighbourly relations with Kuwait. UNAMI continues to convey the message that reaffirmation by Iraq of the border demarcated in 1993 and affirmed in resolution 833 (1993) is indispensable to bringing the resolution of other outstanding issues to a close, counting on the reassurance of the Government of Kuwait that normalizing relations is of mutual interest and benefit.

Finally, reconciliation requires strong commitment to upholding human rights, which in many ways are still under tremendous pressure. We urge the authorities in Baghdad and Erbil to take very seriously the alarm sounded by the International Federation of Journalists that violence against journalists in Iraq is again on the rise, and its call for investigations in two recent killings. UNAMI is also concerned regarding reports of ill-treatment and torture in secret detention places. Stemming the trend of ongoing violence that has hit scores of innocent citizens yet again requires both effective security forces and consistent application of the law in order to avoid a vicious cycle of infringement of elementary rights.

Allow me finally to draw the Council's attention to the conditions that should enable the United Nations to play its mandated roles. At this particular moment, we have to anticipate important consequences from the reduction of support services by the United States forces in light of the drawdown between now and the end of 2011. Given high security risks to the United Nations that will likely continue in the foreseeable future, the ability to provide adequate protection to United Nations staff remains key when determining the level and extent of the future presence of the Organization in Iraq.

We are working more and more with the Iraqi security forces. It has been established, however, that the provision by the Iraqi security forces of the full range of security services that the United Nations requires will be gradual and will take some time. That will necessitate a combination of security options

during this transitional period, including by improving the United Nations own capabilities; gradually increasing reliance on the Iraqi security forces; additional support from Member States, especially more United Nations guards; and, as a last resort, judiciously outsourcing some security functions, in accordance with principles outlined in General Assembly resolution 55/232.

In that regard, the United Nations in Iraq will also have to work towards becoming self-reliant in the full range of life-support and logistical services. The ability to deploy staff to Iraq is directly linked to the availability of safe accommodation and offices, together with security and air assets. As the Council is aware, preparations for a new United Nations compound in Baghdad are under way, following the offer by the Government of Iraq of a construction lot and payment of the initial contribution of $25 million as part of a proposed 50 per cent share.

We count on the attention and support of Member States in the framework of the forthcoming budget process to enable the United Nations to continue to be represented in Iraq with the current footprint and, if possible and as requested by Iraq, more than that. The alternative will be a reduction in presence with a negative impact at a time when major tasks are still ahead and the demand for United Nations support is already more than can be supplied at the moment.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Melkert for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Al Bayati (Iraq): Allow me at the outset, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month. I would also like to thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Japan, for his efforts during Japan's presidency in the month of April. Our thanks also go to Mr. Ad Melkert, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, and his team in Baghdad and New York for their vigorous efforts to assist the Iraqi Government and people.

My delegation takes note of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/240) and the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), and would like to present the following comments.

On the political and security level, although Mr. Melkert expressed some concerns about the delays in the political process of setting up an Iraqi Government, we believe that there is effective deliberation going on now between the various political groups in order to reach a consensus regarding that Government. Mr. Melkert also expressed concerns about the security situation, especially the assassination yesterday in Mosul of a newly elected Member of Parliament, Bashar Al-Aqidi. We believe that this was the result of terrorist activities in Iraq, which have been aimed at trying to exploit the vacuum created by the delay in forming a Government. With regard to our relations with the brotherly and neighbourly State of Kuwait, I can assure Mr. Melkert and the Security Council that Iraq is committed to all Council resolutions, especially those regarding relations with Kuwait and the borders.

On 7 March, the Iraqi people took an important step in building and structuring democracy in Iraq. More than 12 million Iraqis inside and outside Iraq, through their participation in casting their votes in the Iraqi parliamentary elections, challenged all obstacles, expressed their determination to select their representatives, and signified their intention to continue to have their say in the formation of the Government that will run the country for the next four years.

The success of the electoral process in its various stages in Iraq is another achievement of the Iraqi Government, the security forces and the Independent High Electoral Commission. Through their meticulous efforts, a safe environment was provided and voting procedures were conducted with the highest level of integrity and transparency. This was observed by all the international and regional bodies that exercise a supervisory role to ensure the integrity of the electoral process. I would also like to commend the important role that the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq provided in its advisory, assistance and logistical support to the Independent High Electoral Commission.

The judicial decision on the vote recount of Baghdad province, due to a number of complaints made by political entities, was an important step in the successful completion of the electoral voting process. As guaranteed by Iraqi law, the complaints regarding the legitimacy of the elections and credibility of their results were addressed so that the results could be confirmed, especially in the wake of the political controversy that followed the announced results. The

Independent High Electoral Commission implemented the legal decision through a recount of the votes at 11,000 polling stations in the city of Baghdad. This led to the discovery of minor differences that did not affect the announced results for the Baghdad Governorate.

The political process in Iraq is ongoing and will continue as political rivals turn to the law and the Constitution to find solutions to political problems. This process represents an important development in the rule of law in Iraq's political culture and a momentous cornerstone of the peaceful political process in the building of a State in which the sovereignty of law and institutions, rather than individuals and parties, rules.

The joint efforts of the central Iraqi Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government in resolving outstanding issues have produced fruitful results. On 17 May, the Council of Ministers approved the implementation of the agreement between the Ministry of Oil and the Kurdish Regional Government, which will allow the export of crude oil produced in the Kurdistan region and the payment of financial dues to the oil companies.

In the context of the continuing development of the capacity of the Iraqi security forces to gather information and respond immediately to potential threats, on 18 April, with the support of American forces, our security forces carried out a successful operation in the Al-Tharthar area in Salahaddin province north of Baghdad that led to the death of the Egyptian terrorist Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, Al-Qaida's military leader in Iraq, and Mohammed Khalil al-Zawi, known as Abu Omar al-Baghdadi, alleged leader of the Al Qaida-affiliated terrorist organization known as the Islamic State of Iraq. The death of these terrorists was a devastating blow to Al-Qaida's network in Iraq, which has carried out many of the terrorist operations that have targeted innocent civilian lives. At the same time, this represents a significant victory for the Iraqi security forces in their continuing efforts to combat terrorism.

In the context of successes achieved in security, on 22 April Manaf Abdul Rahim al-Rawi, known as the "governor of Baghdad" by the Islamic State of Iraq, was captured. He was responsible for the perpetration of deadly bombings in Baghdad, resulting in the horrific loss of hundreds of innocent civilian lives. I would like to emphasize here today that messages of death and destruction sent by terrorist forces will not hinder the democratic process and reconstruction of Iraq, nor will they discourage the Iraqi Government and people from moving forward on the path of building a stable State based on law and civic institutions.

The Iraqi security authorities apprehended Tarek Abdelqadir al-Jazari and Abdullah Azam al-Qahtani, known as Snan al-Saudi, who had made contact with the number-two person in the Al-Qaida network, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, and who were planning to carry out acts of violence and detonate explosions at the start of the World Cup in South Africa. Once again, the Iraqi Government's victory in its battle against terrorism is in the interest of all States regionally and globally.

Under the auspices of His Excellency Prime Minister Nuri Kamel al-Maliki and in the presence of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, Iraq's Foreign Ministry building was reopened. Its reconstruction had been completed after it was targeted by terrorist attacks on 19 August 2009, attacks in which 562 staff members of the Foreign Ministry were injured and 42 lost their lives. We are still seeing attacks and terrorist operations being carried out, such as the assassination of the newly elected member of parliament. However, I think the security situation in general has improved dramatically in the past few months.

The Iraqi Government continues its effort to benefit from former cadres of the Iraqi army who are innocent from shedding the blood of the Iraqi people. The Ministry of Defence recently announced that, by the end of 2009, around 13,000 former members of the Iraqi army had been reassigned to serve and that another 7,000 were to be reassigned soon. That makes a total of 20,000 former army members reassigned to the Iraqi army as part of the Iraqi Government's continuous efforts to resolve the issue of military personnel who had served in the Iraqi army under the former regime.

In the framework of the continued security forces coordination effort between the Iraqi Government and the United States Government, the United States forces handed over the joint security command centre east of Baghdad to the competent Iraqi authorities. This step represents progress in the efforts of the Iraqi Government to receive and fully operate all security centres in preparation for the full withdrawal of United

States troops in accordance with the time frame agreed upon between the two countries.

The improvement of the security situation has coincided with the Iraqi Government's policy plans to return displaced Iraqis within Iraq and abroad. This has led to an increase in the numbers of Iraqis returning to their homes, both from within Iraq and from abroad. Reports from the Ministry of Immigration and Migration on 31 March 2010 on the return of displaced families indicate the return of 61,285 persons displaced abroad and internally. Since that date, the figure has increased by an additional 41,852 internally displaced persons and 7,241 persons returning from abroad. The Iraqi Government is still working in conjunction with international specialized bodies to manage all of the necessary requirements for the continuation of the return of families — both from abroad and internally displaced — to their homes.

On the economic and social levels, Iraq has signed and the Council of Ministers has endorsed the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Iraq for the period 2011 to 2014. The Framework represents an update of the cooperation between the Iraqi Government and the United Nations for the coming five years. The agreement includes cooperation on all aspects of human rights, the rule of law and economic reform, as well as in the areas of basic services and social and human capacity-building for employees in ministries and State institutions.

Iraq's oil exports have witnessed remarkable stability over the past few months, as Iraq exported around 2 million barrels per day. The Iraqi Government continues to work to increase the amount of oil to be exported during the current year, with projections of up to 2,325,000 barrels per day. In the framework of the Iraqi Government's ongoing efforts to develop the oil industry in order to reduce Iraq's importation of oil products, the Iraqi Oil Ministry called on the National Investment Commission to hold a preparatory meeting to develop mechanisms and a programme with a view to convening a large conference of investment authorities in the provinces so that Arab, foreign and local companies could be invited to invest in oil refineries in accordance with the Iraqi investment law in order to develop the capacity of oil refineries in Iraq.

The Oil Ministry is now preparing for the third round of bidding, which will focus on investment in natural gas fields. The bidding will include three major fields — the Saybah field, the Mansourieh field and the Akas field — and will focus on developing Iraqi gas production to meet Iraq's growing natural gas needs and to develop the productive potential of these fields to allow the export of natural gas to foreign markets.

In the context of the Iraqi Government's efforts to enhance economic openness between Iraq and the rest of the world, on 13 May 2010 the Council of Ministers took the decision to authorize the Minister of Transport to negotiate and sign a draft air transport agreement between the Government of the Republic of Iraq and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That is an additional step in our efforts to open up to other countries of the world, especially in fields of vital importance, such as air transport.

In the framework of the gradual improvement of the humanitarian situation in Iraq, in its Humanitarian Action Report 2010, UNICEF mentioned the end of the acute emergency stage of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq and stressed the need for investments inside the country to change from just the distribution of relief and rehabilitation on a small scale to more durable solutions to increase the strength of communities.

Some in the media have recently made an exaggerated fanfare over the existence of secret prisons in Iraq and the torture of detainees. On this issue, the Minister for Human Rights, Her Excellency Ms. Wijdan Mikhail Salim, held a press conference on 20 April 2010, at which she pointed out that the media reports did not highlight the presence of any violations but only distorted the truth and insulted the Iraqi Government. Ms. Wijdan Mikhail Salim noted that the Prime Minister had ordered the creation of committees to investigate all the allegations referred to and a number of legal proceedings to stop abuses, which might occur in any prison or detention centre. The Minister also pointed out that political objectives were behind the distortions, which sought to undermine the security achievements made by the Iraqi Government, especially as they coincided with the killings of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi and Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, the most prominent symbols of Al-Qaida in Iraq.

At the regional and international levels, in the framework of regional and international openness in Iraq, the recent period witnessed a number of events, including the following: the visit on 17 May 2010 of Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, who reviewed the work of the

committee to coordinate diplomatic and political benefits between Iraq and the United States; the visit on 11 May 2010 of His Excellency Mr. Arshad Hermzlo, Special Envoy of the Turkish President; the visit of His Excellency Mr. Christian Estrosi, French Industry Minister; the visit on 25 February 2010 of the Republic of Korea's Minister of Knowledge Economy, Mr. Choi Kyung-hwan, who attended the first conference of the Iraqi-Korean Economic Cooperation Forum; and the visit on 23 February 2010 of Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, for the opening the new headquarters of the Swedish Embassy in Baghdad.

The President of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Jalal Talabani, made a series of visits to other countries, including Iran on 26 March 2010, where he met with the Supreme Leader His Eminence Ayatollah Ali Khamenei; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 11 April 2010, where he met the Saudi King, His Royal Highness Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud; and to Egypt on 8 May 2010, where he met the Egyptian President, His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Hosni Mubarak, and the Secretary-General of the Arab League, His Excellency Mr. Amr Moussa.

His Excellency Vice-President Adil Abdul-Mahdi made a series of visits, including to Syria on 3 April, where he met Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad; the State of Kuwait on 6 April, where he met with His Royal Highness the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 7 April, where he met His Royal Highness King Abdullah II. His Excellency Vice-President Tariq al-Hashimi also made a series of visits, including to the United Arab Emirates on 3 April, where he met His Royal Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan; the State of Qatar on 5 April, where he met with His Royal Highness the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani; Bahrain on 6 April, where he met with His Royal Highness King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa and Bahraini Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa; the State of Kuwait on 13 April, where he met Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where he met His Royal Highness King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud; and Turkey on 18 April, where he met a number of Turkish officials.

Iraq is still suffering from the sanctions imposed upon it by Security Council resolutions on the disarmament of weapons of mass destruction and denying Iraq the use of technological advances and research. The Ministry of Industry is being deprived of technology necessary to rehabilitate the factories of Iraq. The Ministry of Agriculture is unable to import various types of fertilizers. The Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Science and Technology are unable to procure the necessary laboratories for scientific research. Lastly, the Ministry of Health is denied many important services for the treatment of many diseases.

In the context of Iraq's efforts to implement its obligations under Security Council resolutions on dismantling weapons of mass destruction, Minister for Foreign Affairs Hoshyar Zebari wrote, in a letter dated 17 February 2010 addressed to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Yukiya Amano, that, in accordance with article 17 of the additional protocol signed between Iraq and IAEA on 9 October 2008, Iraq had declared that it would comply provisionally with the protocol pending its entry into force.

In its presidential statement of 26 February (S/PRST/2010/5), the Security Council welcomed that fact as consistent with Iraqi law. It also requested that the IAEA inform the Council as soon as possible regarding the quality of Iraq's safeguards-related cooperation with the Agency. In that connection, in a letter of reply addressed to the Secretary-General and contained in the annex to document S/2010/150, the Director General stated that the Agency had been receiving excellent cooperation from Iraq in the implementation of its comprehensive safeguards agreement. On that basis, my Government has renewed its demand that the Security Council review the restrictions imposed by resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991), with a view to lifting them.

In conclusion, I would like to stress my Government's gratitude for UNAMI's role in Iraq and for the support provided by Mr. Ad Melkert at the Government's request.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6321

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6321st meeting

Tuesday, 25 May 2010, 12.50 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mr. Moretti
	China	Mr. Long Zhou
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Arima
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Nigeria	Mr. Adamu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Söylemez
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2010/217)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-37507 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 12.50 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2010/217)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Chad, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2010/251, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2010/217, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad.

I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2010/250, which contains a letter dated 21 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1923 (2010).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): Austria voted in favour of the resolution although we would have preferred a more gradual approach to be taken in the drawdown of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), as well as the continuation of a protection of civilians mandate for the Mission. At the same time, we note and underscore that MINURCAT has at least been authorized to respond to imminent threats of violence to civilians in its immediate vicinity.

We respect the decision of the Government of Chad to assume full responsibility of the security and stability of the civilian population in eastern Chad, including refugees, internally displaced persons, returnees and host communities. We appreciate the efforts undertaken by the Chadian authorities to provide the Security Council with a better understanding of their plans and capabilities in this field. We trust that the Government of Chad will do its utmost to fulfil its responsibilities and use all available capabilities for the protection of the population in Eastern Chad.

At the same time, it is of the greatest importance that the joint Government of Chad/United Nations high-level working group assume the key role provided for in the resolution and regularly assess the situation on the ground with respect to the protection of civilians and humanitarian access. We call upon the Government of Chad and the Secretariat to cooperate as closely as possible within the working group.

There is a continued need for the Council to follow developments closely and to be regularly informed about the situation on the ground. Austria believes that the possibility of a further international

engagement in eastern Chad should not be excluded if deemed necessary for humanitarian reasons.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6322

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6322nd meeting

Wednesday, 26 May 2010, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Hariri	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Burt
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Intercultural dialogue for peace and security

Letter dated 19 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2010/248)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-37690 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Intercultural dialogue for peace and security

Letter dated 19 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2010/248)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now being its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2010/248, which contains a letter dated 19 May 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper for the item under consideration.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

On behalf of the Council, I also extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Alistair Burt, Member of Parliament, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom.

I shall now make statement in my capacity as Prime Minister of Lebanon to begin today's discussion.

There is an intimate relationship between committing oneself to the Charter of the United Nations and opting for dialogue as a way to achieve world peace and security. Undoubtedly, there is a need to consider that relationship in all its aspects, and this has led United Nations bodies and agencies to initiate programmes and formulate guidelines. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 53/22, which proclaimed 2001 as the Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations, a great number of events have taken place. Successive — and not redundant — efforts have been undertaken to increase the opportunities for dialogue, benefit from their assets and strengthen their impact. Lebanon has taken part in these efforts. Its contribution has been inspired by its specific historical experience and its societal and political model, which is often described as unique.

The position of Lebanon on the aims, value and methodology of dialogue, as well as on the conditions that make it credible and effective, have been clearly stated on many occasions, notably during the General Assembly's 2007 High-level Dialogue on Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace and in the address of the His Excellency the President of the Lebanese Republic in 2008 in support of the dialogue initiative of King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia. Through such occasions and endeavours, Lebanon bears witness to the strong ties that bind our country to the United Nations, which has consistently demonstrated its attention and commitment to Lebanon's freedom, sovereignty and stability. Also, they show our respect for international resolutions and reflect Lebanon's endeavours to promote the significance and promise of positive encounters between religions and cultures.

Members are well aware of the difficulties that have tested our country and people, but that have not shaken our will to live together in one homeland, enriched by its diversity and openness and proud of its partnership between Christians and Muslims in designing a common national future and destiny.

The need for dialogue between people of different faiths and cultures is all the greater today in view of the problems faced in relations between peoples and communities, and the dangers of confrontation that may be brought about by policies based on threats, intimidation and fear. Dialogue stems from recognition of identities and specificities and respect for religious and cultural diversity; at the same time, these values must not be expressed in hostility towards others, which can lead to the drawing of bloody religious and cultural borders.

For that reason, we believe that dialogue must encompass an awareness of traditional, renewed and new phenomena of sectarian and ethnic violence, terrorism and intimidation. And the best way to address and pre-empt these phenomena is to deal with their root causes through preventive diplomacy. This requires a coalition against fanaticism and extremism, and it demands that conflicts be settled peacefully and justly. Moreover, as a complement, patient efforts to engage in dialogue should be made in the areas of policy, culture and media in order to heighten

immunity to violence, extremism and terrorism. Dialogue may not extinguish the fire, but if carried out seriously and resolutely, it will largely diminish the probability of its igniting.

Efforts to launch dialogue in a long-term perspective may open doors that would otherwise be closed by those who look at communities that have distinct cultural and religious identities as monolithic entities with essential and perennial features. Not every dissimilarity reflects a defect, and a community's essence is not embodied in its individual members, holding them accountable for deplorable acts perpetrated by those who share their religion, faith or culture.

This means that dialogue cannot be effective unless it strives to prevent the spillover of violence, be it real or symbolic, from one place to another under the impact of this perception. For that is often the case where remote conflicts intrude on neighbourly relations and local social and political tensions and disputes assume global dimensions, be they cultural or religious. Many countries, including my own, have witnessed such intrusions. That is why we need to caution against seeing our local problems as mere reflections of regional and international confrontations that turn our country into a battleground rather than a homeland for its people that deals with its own internal problems and protects its own unity and diversity.

A dialogue of life focused on culture, society and politics — or coexistence, as we like to call it at home — is the path to preserving unity and being enriched by plurality. These goals are at the heart of our insistence on parity between Muslims and Christians, stipulated in the Taif Accords. This parity strengthens Lebanon's ability to contribute to global intercultural and interreligious dialogue and its self-understanding as a locus of encounter and exchange, rather than an arena of conflict.

We learn from the dialogue of life, which goes hand in hand with the dialogue of ideas, that the search for agreement does not necessarily lead to agreement. However, its importance — indeed, its urgency — resides in acknowledging disagreement and differences for what they are, without artificially understating or exaggerating their significance and implications.

Dialogue does not ignore contradiction or deny democratic competition; it is, rather, a mode of managing plurality so that differences do not generate hostility or cause divisions. Dialogue is not a process of negotiations conditioned by power relations, but a contribution to changing these relations, even in relative terms, in order to ensure equal footing among dialogue partners. That is why the practice of dialogue at the global level converges with diplomatic action driven by international law and rejects the logic of might, imposition and double standards.

Be that as it may, such an affirmation does not dissipate the ambiguities that colour its reality. The advocacy of dialogue among nations and the promotion of a culture of peace raise doubts among many people about their credibility and utility, as well as fears that they may function as a pretext or cover for an ulterior political motive alien to its raison d'être. Dialogue is not true to its meaning if unavowed objectives hide behind its stated aims. It does not bear fruit unless its partners agree to build equitable relations. Maintaining hegemony, oppression and injustice without raising fundamental ethical questions renders dialogue itself questionable.

This is true in our country, which has been subject to 25 years of Israeli occupation and recurrent Israeli wars. Thousands of Lebanese citizens have been killed, our economy and stability have been severely affected by Israeli threats and massacres, and the occupation of parts of our land continues. It is legitimate to ask how dialogue can build confidence and new relationships in the context of the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab lands and the persistent denial of the national and human rights of the Palestinian people, and more particularly their rights to return and to an independent State, with Jerusalem as its capital. In other words, the spirit of justice and respect for international law and legitimacy must prevail if an authentic dialogue is to occur. This is all the more true since Jerusalem, the city of peace and meeting place of the believers of the monotheistic religions, cannot fulfil its historical vocation unless its people are freed from injustice, changes in its demography and character cease, and an end is put to its occupation.

I am sure that we are all aware that establishing a just and genuine peace in Palestine, as called for in the Arab Peace Initiative, would have a substantial impact on relations between cultures and religions. Moreover, a just peace is necessary if dialogue is to succeed as an approach to crisis-solving and achieving genuine

rapprochement between the Western world and the Arab and Muslim worlds.

Finally, in opening the debate on the topic of this meeting, I would like to reaffirm the commitment of my country, Lebanon, to the universal ethical values of the United Nations Charter that guide its diplomacy and programmes, particularly in mediation and conflict resolution. These values are the basis of intercultural dialogue, and intercultural dialogue in turn promotes them.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I again thank His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his participation in this meeting and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: Mr. Prime Minister, it is a great pleasure to welcome you to the United Nations. As this is your first visit to the United Nations in your capacity as Prime Minister of Lebanon, I wish you great success and hope for peace and stability under your leadership. I also welcome Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, Mr. Alistair Burt, to the Security Council.

I thank you, Sir, for using Lebanon's presidency of the Security Council to have this discussion on intercultural dialogue. This is an important topic for Lebanon and for all Member States. It is especially relevant now on the eve of the third Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, which will begin Friday in Rio de Janeiro and to which I will travel directly from this meeting. I once again salute the leadership of the original sponsors of the Alliance, Turkey and Spain, and thank the Government of Brazil for hosting the meeting.

Support for the Alliance keeps growing. We just welcomed the one-hundredth member, the United States. I hope that the Alliance's membership and work will expand further still. It is the right initiative at the right time. Our world is changing rapidly, and it is changing in unpredictable ways. We are growing more connected through migration, trade and technology, yet in some ways we are also moving further apart. Not only are countries coming into more frequent contact with each other, but many are themselves becoming more multicultural and diverse.

To many, this enrichment is a matter of celebration; yet to others, it can be confusing and intimidating. Local challenges can easily spill over national and regional borders. In the same way, local solutions can be shared and inspire change elsewhere. This underscores the need to build space for cooperation and to strengthen mutual understanding and respect. This should not be done as a feel-good exercise, but because it is essential for achieving peace and security in the broadest sense.

Dialogue can defuse tensions and keep situations from escalating. It can promote reconciliation in the aftermath of conflict. It can introduce moderate voices into polarized debates. At a time when prejudice and hatred are all too common, extremists seek new recruits through incitement and identity-based appeals, and politicians use divisiveness as a strategy to win elections, dialogue can be an antidote. Dialogue is a force for conflict prevention, management and resolution. It can contribute to peacebuilding. It can move us towards peaceful coexistence — the fundamental human project.

But this work requires action on many levels. There is a need to protect cultural diversity. That is a basic human right, enshrined in many legally binding instruments. Just five days ago, to mark the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, seven human rights rapporteurs released a joint statement calling on States to uphold their responsibility under international law to create an environment conducive to the enjoyment of cultural rights, including the rights of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and indigenous peoples.

Education must also be a priority. It has been said that knowledge is power. We need to strengthen education systems so that young people can benefit from cultural diversity and not be victimized by those who exploit differences. Increased exposure to information and communications technology makes this more critical. We must also cast a wide net of engagement. Solutions will require the active partnership of local Governments, civil society, the media, young leaders and many others. This is our common responsibility.

The General Assembly proclaimed 2010 to be the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. Many summits and commendable efforts have likewise sought to bridge the world's dividing lines. We all

recall the General Assembly's high-level meeting on the culture of peace two years ago, held at the initiative of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia. We all agree on the importance of intercultural dialogue and shared values for peace and security.

The challenge now, for the Security Council in particular, is to follow up on today's discussion by incorporating intercultural dialogue more fully into its efforts to maintain international peace and security. Many members of the Council have ample experience in the problems that can ensue from cross-cultural tensions and perceptions of injustice, but they are also well versed in the benefits of dialogue and the great strength to be found in diversity. I urge the members of the Council to draw more on these experiences and share the lessons they have learned. Intercultural dialogue is an important tool in the diplomat's toolkit. I urge Council members to make greater use of it.

I thank Prime Minister Hariri once again for focusing our minds on strengthening this important work.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to the members of the Council.

Mr. Burt (United Kingdom): I am delighted to be the first Minister of the new British Government to address the Security Council. It is a particular honour that you are in the chair, Sir, as I do so, particularly on a day when my Foreign Secretary has made a key announcement in the House of Commons in relation to non-proliferation, which is designed to assist all our efforts to promote understanding through greater transparency among nations. I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on Lebanon's membership of the Council and pay tribute to your delegation's handling of Lebanon's presidency this month.

I would also like to join in welcoming the Secretary-General to the Council and to thank him for his kind and welcoming introductory remarks. The new British Government looks forward very much to working closely with him.

We welcome the importance you attach, Mr. President, to intercultural dialogue as an instrument to prevent, manage and resolve conflict and to build peace after conflict. We see all too often that prejudice and misunderstanding can cause and perpetuate conflict within and between societies.

In Afghanistan, it is clear that sustainable peace requires a truly representative, transparent Afghan political process that will give all Afghans a real stake in that process. Next month's peace jirga is an important opportunity to begin a process of dialogue aimed at achieving an enduring national consensus for a political settlement. We must all support this process as a fundamental part of ensuring that Afghanistan emerges after 30 years of conflict as a peaceful and functioning State.

In the Middle East, the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian issue has been a source of anger and resentment for over 60 years. It is one of the biggest obstacles to intercultural dialogue and understanding, particularly among Muslims, Jews and Christians. We will work for peace in the Middle East with a secure and universally recognized Israel living alongside a sovereign and viable Palestinian State.

The current process of proximity talks offers hope for a solution. We welcome and support the United States efforts. We call on the parties to continue working to narrow the gaps between them and to take the bold political decisions necessary to achieving a lasting peace. The region must play its role, too, by supporting dialogue and negotiation and taking steps to build a greater sense of trust.

We applaud the range of international efforts under way to promote intercultural dialogue. We support the work of the Alliance of Civilizations in promoting such dialogue as a means of preventing conflict. I wish the Alliance well as it begins its annual Forum in Brazil tomorrow. The Alliance is at its best when engaged in projects that draw on the energy of the media and civil society to promote dialogue and understanding.

I would like to highlight three points. First, while intercultural dialogue should acknowledge our differences, it must also be built on universal human values. The United Nations has led the way in promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent human rights treaties. These rights and freedoms are universal, indivisible and interdependent. Respect for those rights enriches and underpins our common humanity.

Secondly, dialogue must mean exactly that. Your moving opening address, Mr. President, made clear your views on this. It requires a willingness to be influenced as well as to influence. It must be based on the recognition that diplomacy, politics and life are not a zero-sum game. Reconciliation requires both an acceptance of different views and approaches and the recognition of shared values and common interests, and — as you yourself said — not avoiding the difficult things or ignoring contradictions. The United Nations, with its unique legitimacy and global reach, is well placed to support such dialogue.

Thirdly, we need an approach to intercultural dialogue that builds understanding of cross-cultures and helps us deal with diversity and difference in a tolerant and respectful way. This cannot be done only by politicians or by the diplomacy of the United Nations. It must begin with open societies whose citizens are able to engage positively with other cultures, both in their own country and around the world. The Secretary-General observed this in his opening remarks as well, when he said that improved technology and communications will ensure that those we represent are better informed than ever before and ever more keen to join with others in the dialogue we are discussing today. This openness in communication, and the involvement of those we represent, will both inspire and challenge us in our roles on their behalf.

Thank you again, Mr. President, for organizing today's debate. We must now ensure that its lessons are reflected in the Council's ongoing vital work in preventing and resolving conflict. May intercultural dialogue help all of us to live up to the highest ideals, as set out in the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of France, I thank Lebanon for having taken the initiative to bring us together under its presidency of the Security Council to discuss the contribution of intercultural dialogue to peace and security. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement. As French President Nicolas Sarkozy stressed on his most recent visit to Beirut, Lebanon is for us, the French, a glorious crossroads of civilizations and religions, a symbol of openness and diversity. Lebanon, a country that unites life and Government in dialogue and the continuing quest for concord for the benefit of all and of different communities, embodies what peace can owe to tolerance, respect for others and the acceptance of differences.

Since 11 September 2001, dialogue among cultures and civilizations has been on the international agenda, for better or for worse. No one can deny the benefits of dialogue between individuals and groups in a globalized world where cultural identity has assumed increasing importance. Intercultural dialogue can be a tool for preventing conflicts, resolving crises and building peace, but it cannot be an end in itself. Cultures are not homogeneous, autonomous or frozen entities that we can bring together around a table. Every individual can legitimately claim several cultural identities, or choose not to have one at all. Intercultural dialogue, then, should not lead to the political instrumentalization of cultures, which belong to no one, are neither fixed nor exclusive, and are bridges rather than fortresses or weapons.

Tolerance and mutual respect are at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations, and we can therefore only welcome the fact that initiatives on intercultural dialogue are developing under its auspices. Since its creation, UNESCO has worked for rapprochement and understanding among peoples, to promote peace and cultural diversity. The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions are essential instruments. UNESCO is therefore by its nature the right place for such matters.

For our part, States members of the Security Council have the responsibility to act to prevent or put an end to conflicts. This requires us to take into account the many factors that can raise tensions between communities, one of which is culture. But the cultural factor is rarely the direct or single cause of conflict; in reality, more often than not it is exploited by radicals of all stripes.

It is in this context that France supports dialogue among cultures, because cultural diversity is at the heart of the French national identity: Atlantic and Mediterranean France; maritime and continental France; Mediterranean and African France. France is made up of a multitude of traditions, customs and beliefs. Our secularism seeks, within the French national community, to organize the peaceful coexistence of all beliefs and non-beliefs, which must remain in the private sphere in order to make public

life a place where all can gather around the values of the Republic. We are neither Catholics nor atheists; neither Jews nor Muslims; we are French citizens, sons and daughters of the nation.

Furthermore, diversity, a fact of life today in our towns and cities, is at the heart of the European project. We must recognize that diversity. Old countries with Christian traditions must now allow their Muslim citizens to practice and live their religions, just as Muslim countries must do for Christians and Jews. The successful establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean, which France co-chairs with Egypt, illustrates this determination to build a concrete, common future in a world of broad human, religious and cultural diversity. Our activity in the area of Francophonie, committed to promoting human rights, democracy and peacebuilding, also demonstrates our resolve to pursue our common political objectives through dialogue in respect for cultural diversity. Finally, France is a member of the Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilizations, whose projects we welcome as instruments of preventive diplomacy. In that regard, we look forward to the forthcoming ministerial Forum of the Alliance on 28 and 29 May.

Respect for the values and universal principles of human rights is the indispensable foundation on which intercultural dialogue should be built and reinforced. That dialogue cannot exist outside civil society; it must encourage the participation of women; it must include representatives of every religion and every spiritual, philosophical and humanistic tradition in all their diversity and multiplicity; it must not permit any discrimination, be it on the basis of religion, public opinion, sexual orientation, gender or nationality. In order to have dialogue, one must be able to listen to contrary and critical opinions. The exercise of freedom of expression is a sine qua non for intercultural dialogue.

This freedom of expression is indivisible; it is either there or it is not. To limit it in any way, shape or form would be to deny its very existence. It is in the context of its unshakeable and resolute attachment to liberty that France will continue to be devoted to the dialogue between cultures and civilizations.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased to welcome you, Sir, to the presidency of the Security Council, and we thank the Lebanese delegation for its initiative to convene today's meeting on the important and topical theme of intercultural dialogue. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his statement, which enriched our discussion.

A sweeping analysis of the path of world history leads us to the conviction that approaches to current international problems, including peace and security, must be linked to the cultural diversity of global civilizations. In this regard, the Russian Federation welcomes the creation of relevant and various platforms for dialogue within and on the margins of the United Nations. Two important initiatives, we believe, are the Alliance of Civilizations, sponsored by Spain and Turkey, and the trilateral forum on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace and Development sponsored by the Philippines. We believe that the potential of these and similar initiatives is their complementary nature, which should rule out any element of competition.

As was emphasized by the Secretary-General, today's meeting is also very timely in the light of tomorrow's opening in Rio de Janeiro of the third Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations and the declaration of 2010 as the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures.

The Russian Federation is a country that brings together many ethnicities, cultures, religions and social groups, and we therefore strongly believe that encouraging tolerance among cultures and their mutual enrichment is of tremendous significance in today's world, which faces the exacerbation of inter-ethnic, political, economic and social clashes in which existing differences are used to justify terrorism and extremism.

Factors promoting the growth of extremism are, of course, uninformed or distorted views of religion, history and the cultures of other peoples, as well as the skilful manipulation of these concepts. That, in turn, leads to mistrust, alienation, often hostility and sometimes even confrontation. For our part, we hold to be false and erroneous the notion of a conflict of civilizations and cultures, which is based on false cultural and civilizational views and stereotypes. The Russian Federation therefore categorically rejects any attempt to associate any specific religion or culture with such global threats as terrorism or transnational organized crime.

Achieving sustainable peace and security undoubtedly requires mutual familiarity and

understanding, tolerance and respect for the diversity of national cultures, traditions and religious customs. That, in turn, is the basis for effective joint efforts of the members of the international community to confront today's global challenges, including in the area of security, to which the Council pays a great deal of attention.

One of the time-tested ways for the international community to react diplomatically to conflict situations is mediation. The work of mediators requires not least deep knowledge of historical, cultural and other specificities of conflicts. Of course, the work of mediators must be duly transparent and, if under a Council mandate, accountable to the Council.

The United Nations does not possess a monopoly on mediation, so the use of regional agencies, arrangements and agreements is an important mechanism called for in Article 33 of the United Nations Charter. Chapter VIII of the Charter focuses Member States on the priority resolution of so-called local disputes with the help of such agencies, arrangements and agreements before referring them to the Council.

The United Nations must leverage the experience and expertise of regional organizations in its work and approach questions of mediation on the basis of the principle of reasonable division of labour with these regional and subregional bodies. Due to objective factors, it is the regional players that are the most receptive to the cultural and historical dimensions of conflict, and that of course promotes the success of a mediation mission.

In addition to the acknowledged partners in this area — in particular the African Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and organizations on other continents — we believe that there are good prospects for United Nations cooperation with organizations that are actively gaining experience, such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The universal nature of the United Nations dictates the need for each Member State to consider the religious traditions and diversity of world cultures and religions. The cultural wealth of humankind in and of itself possesses significant peacekeeping potential that is capable of preventing the so-called clash of civilizations and of making a significant contribution to conflict resolution. We believe that the United Nations is, in fact, the unique platform for building bridges and overcoming prejudices and misunderstandings that inherently threaten to peace and security. How effectively we use this capacity will, to a significant degree, determine our success in implementing the major purposes of the Organization — ensuring global security, development and respect for human rights.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to welcome Prime Minister Hariri as he presides over today's Council meeting and to thank him for his very insightful statement. Japan congratulates Lebanon on having organized this discussion on an important topic.

Intercultural dialogue is an essential tool for conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. As the Secretary-General asserted in his opening statement, the United Nations Charter calls for international cooperation in solving global problems and promoting fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. It underscores the relevance of intercultural dialogue to the work of the United Nations.

First of all, the importance of intercultural dialogue for conflict prevention cannot be overemphasized. Lack of respect and tolerance for each other's ways of life, religions and cultures has been a common cause of conflict. Mistrust and prejudice between peoples and their differences have all too often led to tension and even war. Diversity within societies and between countries in fact deepens the richness of humankind so long as the culture of peace and intercultural dialogue are promoted.

The Security Council should place greater emphasis on the peaceful settlement of disputes before violence erupts. The Security Council should encourage more dialogue between parties by making the best use of all tools available in an effective and timely manner before a situation further deteriorates.

The United Nations Charter envisages the role of the Secretary-General to include giving early warning to the Security Council. The Secretary-General may play an active role in the promotion of intercultural dialogue. The recent Security Council retreat concluded that the Security Council and the Secretary-General should jointly maximize the use of available means to promote dialogue and prevent conflicts. In particular, the Council should consider how the United Nations can increase the number of mediators and

political representatives of high calibre. Once conflict abates, intercultural dialogue has to be placed at the heart of efforts to resolve conflicts and reach peace agreements. Freedom to exercise religious belief and respect for cultural heritage must be embedded in the framework of every peace agreement in order to end conflicts and prevent their recurrence. Above all, people of different religions and cultures must learn to coexist peacefully. Confidence-building and reconciliation measures should follow.

Intercultural dialogue is also an important element of a successful post-conflict peacebuilding strategy. The Security Council should recall the thematic debate on peacebuilding last month under the Japanese presidency. In its statement (S/PRST/2010/7) the Council recognized the importance of inclusive dialogue, reconciliation and integration. Education plays an important role here because it can nurture mutual understanding, and a culture of peace can take root where differences can be settled through dialogue and the rule of law without resorting to violence.

Japan is a strong advocate of human security, with its conviction that every individual — irrespective of religion, race, sex or place of residence — is entitled to enjoy a peaceful, healthy life with dignity, free from fear and free from want. Intercultural dialogue presupposes the importance of promoting the human security of people concerned. Japan has been bold in increasing opportunities for intercultural dialogue, including organizing dialogue among civilizations between Japan and the Islamic world, exchange programmes for youth, women and young diplomats from various cultural backgrounds, and an Islamic, Israeli and Palestinian youth exchange programme to advance the Middle East peace process. We also appreciate the strong initiative of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia on dialogue among religions and civilizations.

Intercultural dialogue is the most effective instrument for maintaining peace and security. Japan is committed to enhancing human security through active intercultural dialogue.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): Mr. President, we are honoured by your presence today in the Security Council. I thank Lebanon for holding this very important debate today. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his participation.

This is a timely moment to hold a debate on intercultural dialogue for peace and security, coming as it does on the eve of the Third Global Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, which is going to begin tomorrow in Rio de Janeiro, as has already been mentioned. The Forum will seek to rethink the way tensions among different cultures are dealt with and to launch projects for the promotion of trust and understanding among nations. It will address questions that include the challenges of stimulating integration in multicultural societies and of strengthening the role of women and of religious leaders in the advancement of peace.

It is very fitting that today's debate is promoted by a country such as Lebanon, which knows and appreciates the benefits of the peaceful coexistence of cultures, faiths and traditions and recognizes the value of dialogue and understanding.

The theme of our debate is also very close to the heart of Brazilians. We are a country born of a mix of cultures and ethnicities. We were enriched by the significant contribution that many immigrant groups have made to our country and culture, among which is an important Lebanese community. For us, therefore, intercultural dialogue is not a political preference; it is part of our own identity. We are determined, in the Council and elsewhere, to do our part in promoting and facilitating such dialogue.

As noted in the background note that your delegation, Mr. President, has prepared for this debate (S/2010/248, annex), intercultural dialogue is in no way alien to the concerns of the Security Council. International peace and security cannot be sustained in the absence of adequate communication, mutual understanding and a minimum of trust.

As a universal organization, the United Nations is uniquely placed to facilitate dialogue among nations and cultures. Such dialogue is important to diffuse tensions and to avoid a conflict. It should take place during a conflict, in the form of peacemaking. It must happen afterwards, though peacekeeping, peacebuilding and mechanisms of reconciliation and transitional justice.

Discussions on preventive diplomacy in the United Nations tend to consider issues such as early warning systems, mediation and good offices. They are all necessary and potentially effective. However, in cases where conflict arises or may arise due to

profound differences — actual or perceived — in values, traditions and faiths, there is a deeper perspective of preventive diplomacy that can be explored, one that, instead of managing conflict, seeks to eliminate or mitigate the possibility of conflict by changing the way people and groups see and react to differences.

Such a deeper approach seeks to promote a structured exchange at several levels among persons, groups, governments and cultural and religious organizations. The goal is to correct misconceptions, prove prejudices wrong and mitigate stereotyping and simplistic generalizations.

One element of such an approach must be what some have called education for tolerance — a conscious and sustained effort to form the minds of individuals and to influence the ethos of groups and institutions so that they accept and even welcome the difference. If we succeed in building institutions and educating people in that manner, some of the intangible but very powerful root causes of conflict in many parts of the world will have been eliminated or abated.

The United Nations itself can also contribute to the intercultural dialogue through peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The work with local communities, capacity-building, support to local media, especially radio, and projects that promote dialogue and understanding are all means that can be used to that purpose. They contribute to a culture of peace. They help cement and exemplify the notion that a strong society requires not only the absence of violence, but a foundation of mutual trust and cooperation among diverse traditions and beliefs.

My delegation remains ready to support all efforts at the United Nations aimed at dispelling cultural misconceptions that nurture resentment and contribute to conflict. This Organization, built on the notion of collaboration for the benefit of all, including with regard to peace and security, has an indispensable role to play.

Ms. Anderson (United States of America): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and thank the Secretary-General for the important remarks he made today.

Mr. President, let me begin by thanking you for your recent visit to Washington, D.C. Your visit highlighted the enduring strength of the bilateral relationship between the United States and Lebanon, as well as the many common goals we share, including reaching a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace. The United States continues to strongly support Lebanon's independence and sovereignty and the full implementation of resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006).

We are pleased to note that there have been two rounds of proximity talks between Israelis and Palestinians already. We believe that through good-faith negotiations the parties can agree to an outcome that ends the conflict and reconciles the Palestinian goal of an independent and viable State based on the 1967 lines, with agreed swaps, and Israel's goal of a Jewish State with secure and recognized borders that reflect subsequent developments and meet Israel's security requirements.

The United States recognizes that Jerusalem is a deeply, profoundly important issue for Israelis and Palestinians, for Jews, Muslims and Christians. We believe that through good-faith negotiations, the parties can agree on an outcome that realizes the aspirations of both parties for Jerusalem and that safeguards its status for people around the world.

We call again on our international partners, both inside and outside this Council, to promote an atmosphere of cooperation between the parties. We renew our call for Arab States to advance the promise of the Arab Peace Initiative and take steps that show Israelis, Palestinians and their own citizens that peace is possible and will bring tangible benefits.

Let me thank you, Mr. President, for convening the Council today to discuss the importance of promoting dialogue across cultures. As the world is woven closer together by technology and trade, new ways of thinking are replacing old lines of division. The United States supports frank and open dialogue in the spirit of mutual interest and mutual respect, rooted in the belief that cultures and faiths of the world need not be in conflict. Indeed, despite the great diversity of the human family, cultures the world over share common principles of justice, progress, tolerance and belief in the dignity of all human beings.

Exchanges such as this one help leaders share perspectives and views directly. But we should not neglect the importance of direct person-to-person dialogue and cooperation. Cross-cultural exchange is a task for citizens, not just officials. International

exchange and training programmes have long been important components of United States foreign policy and outreach, but their role is now being expanded. These programmes serve as concrete vehicles for cooperation that can have a lasting impact. The United States currently funds exchanges for more than 2.4 million people a year. And, while each programme is unique, they all advance our goal of promoting understanding among peoples. Millions of Americans, through schools and universities, religious institutions, youth groups and other organizations, help build close ties with peoples all around the world through their own informal exchanges.

Diversity and intercultural dialogue are very much a part of America's history and identity. What President Obama calls "our patchwork heritage" is an abiding source of national strength. The United States has, in many ways, been a long experiment in bridging cultural divides. The United States is a diverse and pluralistic society, one that people of all religious and cultural backgrounds call home. It is very much the American way to celebrate the different ways in which we have been created.

The United States recently decided to join the Group of Friends of the Alliance of Civilizations. Over the past five years, the Alliance has grown into an important global network of partners that fosters dialogue and encourages grass-roots projects in the areas of youth, education, media and the successful integration of migrants. We support the Alliance's mission, and we believe that by joining we can further the innovative, inclusive approach of that promising cultural initiative.

With his historic address in Cairo last year, President Obama called for a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world. As he said,

> "in order to move forward, we must say openly the things we hold in our hearts and that too often are said only behind closed doors. There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other, to learn from each other, to respect one another and to seek common ground".

Not all differences can be easily bridged. Not all disputes will vanish simply from dialogue. But the United States firmly believes that the interests we share as human beings are far more powerful than the forces that would drive us apart. Frank, respectful and open dialogue strengthens those who would resolve disputes through negotiation and non-violence and weakens those who would replace argument and civility with rage, terrorism, violence, aggression and hatred.

Those who seek a partner for respectful dialogue and those who work for just and lasting peace will always have a friend in the United States.

Of course, recognizing our common humanity is only the beginning of our task. Our words must be matched with action, because, more and more, the challenges of our interwoven age are common to all of us, from climate change to nuclear proliferation to pandemic disease. We need global solutions to global challenges, and we need the respectful dialogue that helps us find peaceful solutions to even the most intractable problems.

Mr. Barbalić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, Mr. President, I would like to commend Your Excellency for convening this briefing in order to discuss the very important topic of intercultural dialogue for peace and security.

In an increasingly globalized world, different nations and civilizations live together and interact with each other. Therefore, intercultural dialogue is a permanent process with worldwide participation at all levels and should be placed at the top of the political agenda. At the same time, cultural diversity has become one of the major political challenges to modern democracies, citizenship, pluralism, social cohesion and, above all, peace and stability among nations. Hence, Bosnia and Herzegovina is of the view that intercultural dialogue is one of the key issues of our time.

History has shaped Europe as a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multireligious continent. At the same time, new realities such as migration and globalization are expected to enrich its physiognomy, making it more open, deeply democratic and more multicultural. This pertains also to my country. The Balkans, as an area characterized by countries that share many historic events, with a richness of cultural and religious diversity, are facing challenges and difficulties that require a comprehensive response.

Alienation, misconceptions, exclusion, marginalization and lack of knowledge about the culture, traditions, beliefs and history of others represent a serious threat and challenge to peaceful and

good relations among peoples and nations. Stereotypes regarding religions and civilizations may have serious political implications and create an atmosphere of tension which can erupt into acts of violence, as we have witnessed in many situations.

We are of the belief that intercultural and interreligious dialogue can play an increasingly important role in post-conflict societies, advancing regional cooperation and solving some difficulties. It can also be a useful tool of preventive diplomacy aiming to defuse tensions, support mediation and promote and encourage understanding.

Yet multiculturalism should not be defined simply as a multitude of cultures with equal status, but as a system based on common values and the development of peace. Interculturality refers to a constant interaction between cultures in the spirit of building bridges among peoples. In that regard, reinforcing intercultural dialogue, underlining shared values and promoting the settlement of disputes by peaceful means should be given the utmost priority. Furthermore, the promotion of dialogue among various cultures, on the basis of tolerance and respect for diversity, can result in the reduction of tensions and contribute to international peace and security.

Bosnia and Herzegovina considers that international initiatives in the field of international and intercultural dialogue, encompassing those carried out by the United Nations, including the Alliance of Civilizations, have beneficial effects and should be widely promoted. In December 2009, Bosnia and Herzegovina hosted a conference under the banner of the Alliance of Civilizations. On that occasion, a Declaration was adopted endorsing the principles, objectives and recommendations of the Regional Strategy on Intercultural Dialogue, which aims to contribute to the further building of bridges and strengthening of trust through enhanced intercultural dialogue and cooperation in the region. The Declaration considers education, youth and media as key instruments to build pluralistic, inclusive and cohesive societies, and the Regional Strategy for South-Eastern Europe was the first ever adopted in the framework of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Intercultural dialogue as a tool of peacebuilding is an indispensable instrument for fostering tolerance and consolidating the values of justice, equality and respect. It should be an integral part of nationally owned peacebuilding strategies aiming at promoting the culture of peace and turning pluralism into a source of strength, with equality in diversity.

In a globalized world, where migration is an inevitable phenomenon, the need for interaction among individuals and groups and for understanding of different cultures, traditions and beliefs will be even greater. In that context, efforts should be made to reduce the room for ignorance and stereotyping of those who are different. We believe that tolerance is essential for ensuring social cohesion. At the same time, social cohesion is an important element for peace and security, not only within a country but also between countries.

In that respect, we are of the view that the Security Council, with its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, can and should do more in terms of preventive diplomacy and promotion of intercultural dialogue as a mechanism for maintaining peace and security. Efforts should be made through a dialogue-based approach to problems, including activities such as fact-finding missions, early warning about potential conflicts and, in particular, mediation and confidence-building measures.

We welcome the appointment of special representatives and the use of good offices as alternatives that can yield useful recommendations for the peaceful settlement of disputes prior to preventive deployment or enforcement measures.

Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina is convinced that today's briefing will strengthen our commitment to dialogue as a tool that can contribute to achieving peace and security in the world.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Mr. Prime Minister, your presence at this meeting, which your country had the welcome initiative to convene and for which we express our gratitude, demonstrates once again Lebanon's commitment to the fundamental values of dialogue, tolerance and peace. Intercultural dialogue is fundamental to the maintenance of international peace and security. Its daily practice promotes the development and expansion of relations among peoples and leads them to a better understanding of and acquaintance with one another through what is deepest, truest and most sacred for them.

Promoting cultural diversity and its corollary, dialogue, is the leitmotiv of the international community as we celebrate 2010 as the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. The Security Council cannot stand of the sidelines of this major wave that is calling on the peoples and civilizations of the whole world to come together though intercultural dialogue.

My delegation attaches great importance to our meeting today as a means of establishing synergy between intercultural dialogue and the maintenance of international peace and security. In an international environment buffered by numerous currents, especially those generated by new information and communications technology, the world is increasingly becoming a global village, and the need to bring peoples and cultures together is emerging as an powerful necessity for building peace in the minds of humankind. This need has been heightened by new challenges and threats to international peace and security such as international terrorism and religious extremism. In this context, seeking through dialogue means for compromise among religions, ethnic groups and civilizations is an indispensable tool for promoting peace between nations.

The crises and armed conflicts that characterize much of the current international security environment are fuelled by our passions, our blind selfishness and our refusal to listen to others in a spirit of humanism and humility. It is by setting aside our cultural and individual differences that we will gradually come to understand that what unites us as human beings is far more important than what divides us.

From this standpoint, there is a need for the Security Council, through its many peacekeeping missions, to give priority to dialogue and the reconciliation of peoples and ethnic groups emerging from conflict. When they are effective, these two tools contribute significantly to the restoration of social cohesion and lasting peace. The examples of Rwanda, Liberia and Sierra Leone illustrate this.

Here, the media also have an important role to play in promoting intercultural dialogue and bringing together peoples, communities and races. If there is one thing we must strive to banish from our hearts and minds, it is prejudice and misunderstanding among peoples of different cultures and religions, which are often the causes of crises and conflicts. The principles and ideals of the United Nations are founded on the paradigm of a pluralistic world where intercultural dialogue drives our common humanity.

We can spare present and future generations from the sorrows of war, religious intolerance, terrorism and nuclear threats only if we are able to integrate into our thoughts and actions the cross-cutting values that, instead of pitting our differences against one other, incorporate them lastingly into the body of humanity.

It is through intercultural dialogue that we will grasp the very essence of true peace: a peace which unites and does not divide us, which champions and does not stifle the other, and which, finally, celebrates and does not destroy the diversity and multiplicity of our shared heritage.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): At the outset, Mr. Prime Minister, I should like to extend a warm welcome to you and to thank the Lebanese presidency for having organized this meeting to discuss the importance of intercultural dialogue as a means of safeguarding international peace and security.

Lebanon is a living example of successful intercultural dialogue in itself. That, coupled with your personal commitment to promoting better understanding among different cultures, makes this meeting all the more meaningful and relevant as it is taking place under the Lebanese presidency, and in particular with you yourself in the Chair. We fully support your efforts to consolidate the foundations of peace and stability in Lebanon. Lebanon's success in openness and cultural diversity represents a beacon of hope for the entire region.

I should also like to thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for having made room in his busy schedule to brief us today. I also thank him for his kind words in response to my country's co-sponsorship of the Alliance of Civilizations.

Likewise, I wish to welcome the participation in our meeting today of Mr. Alistair Burt of the United Kingdom.

The reason behind the creation of this universal body 65 years ago was "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Today we are equally committed to the same ideals and endeavour to achieve this goal in a security environment that is even more challenging. Indeed, since the establishment of the

United Nations, the international security environment has been transformed dramatically. Today we live in a globalized world where more and more people from different cultures interact constantly, shrinking the world in unprecedented ways. As such, and as never before, we witness global challenges having local impacts, while local events have the power to impact the whole world.

We also live in an increasingly complex world where, in addition to conventional risks, new and evolving threats emerge, posing enormous challenges to international peace and security. Indeed, asymmetrical risks such as terrorism, extremism, xenophobia and religious and cultural stereotyping present growing sources of concern for our collective security. Given that many of these risks recognize no national boundaries, securing and maintaining peace today remains an even more difficult task for the international community.

Another obvious reality we can speak about in today's world, so full of uncertainties, is that it is beyond the capacity of any single country to tackle these new challenges alone. That is why the international community is compelled to adopt cooperative approaches and strengthen effective multilateralism. All of this in turn necessitates better understanding among nations, enabling them to rise above classic stereotypes, reject us-and-them mentalities and engage in genuine dialogue aimed at attaining our common objectives.

We believe that the United Nations, as the sole international forum with universal membership, must take the lead towards that end and exert every effort to promote intercultural dialogue. And, given the negative security implications of any failure to do that, the Security Council should also assume its fair share of responsibility while dealing with conflict situations.

That is true also because we know today that our security cannot be ensured by military means alone. Intercultural misconceptions are sometimes at the core of the conflicts with which we have to grapple in the Council. Hence, we need comprehensive strategies that address the root causes of these misconceptions, be they historical, cultural, social or economic. Issues related to intercultural dialogue should therefore have their rightful place in our policy formulations. As you mentioned in your introductory remarks, Mr. President, peace in the Middle East is certainly one of those areas that would benefit from such a dialogue. Overall, respect for different cultures and dialogue help moderation and reconciliation in conflict situations.

To this end, we should first and foremost acknowledge cultural diversity as an integral part of the common heritage of humanity and as an asset for the advancement of humankind. To achieve respect and understanding among cultures, we should accept differences, fight ignorance and prejudice, identify commonalities, amplify voices of moderation in our societies, and encourage dialogue at every level. Only then will our quest for social peace and harmony be attained.

Due to its history and geography, Turkey has a special understanding of the need to promote intercultural dialogue. Indeed, over centuries Turkey has historically, geographically and socially straddled and bridged many different cultures and tried to create an environment of mutual understanding among them conducive to peace, stability and prosperity. Our thinking has been firmly based on dialogue and cooperation, and we have always been a strong advocate of cultural tolerance, diversity and moderation. That is also why Turkey feels a special responsibility to actively contribute to the promotion of dialogue and mutual understanding in its region and beyond. For we know by experience that intercultural dialogue plays a constructive role in the fields of conflict prevention, crisis management and peacebuilding.

This is also precisely the reason why, together with Spain, we have co-sponsored the Alliance of Civilizations initiative. Indeed, the Alliance of Civilizations, which was launched by the Prime Ministers of Turkey and Spain in 2005 under the auspices of the Secretary-General, is founded on the very principle that different cultures and civilizations can live together in peace provided that they have a better understanding of the values and principles that unite them.

Since its inception, the Alliance of Civilizations has provided a sound platform to this end, and today it has become a truly global peace initiative aimed at breaking down walls of misperception, connecting people and building bridges towards peaceful cohabitation. Today, the Alliance serves as a global facilitator to promote sustainable dialogue among various stakeholders, including young people, women,

parliamentarians, the media, civil society and the private sector.

We are pleased to see a growing number of Member States embrace and act upon the ideals of the Alliance. In this framework, we welcome the United States as the latest member of our Group of Friends, bringing the total number to 120. Such wide recognition and support makes us all the more hopeful for the future, as only the commitment of Member States to the ideals of cultural diversity can carry the Alliance of Civilizations agenda forward.

As noted by the Secretary-General, our meeting today has proved to be very timely for the Alliance of Civilizations initiative as well, since the third Forum of the Alliance will take place in a few days, on 28 and 29 May in Rio de Janeiro. We are confident that today's meeting and the Rio Forum will provide further impetus for an inclusive and open platform for intercultural dialogue.

Our history reminds us that cultural ignorance has been one of the obstacles to peace and development. Today, the risks are even greater in that regard. Therefore, so long as we empower prejudice and ignorance rather than peaceful coexistence and respect, conflict and poverty will continue to prevail to the detriment of all humankind.

Let us not forget that human development, security and peace are ultimately indivisible and that they are vital for our progress. Intercultural dialogue in this regard will make our efforts easier and stronger while we tackle these challenges in a collective manner. In other words, effective multilateralism will only benefit from a better understanding among different cultures, as it will break down the barriers to multilateral cooperation in many areas of common interest. In this context, it is my very sincere belief that our continued efforts in this direction will produce a more tolerant and peaceful world for future generations.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We highly appreciate your presence in the Security Council today, Sir, and thank the Government of Lebanon for its initiative of organizing this important meeting of the Council, at which we have the opportunity to reflect on a topic that is and should be of particular importance to the Organization. The great majority of Member States have a multi-ethnic makeup that promotes diversity and plurality in contemporary society.

All cultures and civilizations without exception make their own contribution to enriching humankind in the sense that respect for and acceptance of religious, ethnic and cultural diversity are essential values that strengthen the purposes and principles set out in the United Nations Charter. My delegation welcomes today's discussion because we are convinced that the active promotion of the culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations, in which cultural diversity is respected and encouraged, should prove to be a fundamental value governing relations between States.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, armed conflict, terrorism and the most serious violations of human rights — including genocide and crimes against humanity — have exacerbated suspicion and fear among various societies. Misperceptions, ignorance and prejudice often lead to acts of violence that threaten international coexistence. That is why it is essential that we counter stereotypes and false assessments that help to create patterns of hostility and undermine trust among societies and individuals.

However, racism, xenophobia and intolerance in all their manifestations are too deeply rooted in contemporary reality, despite binding legal agreements and the good diplomatic intentions that have emerged in recent years. Intercultural dialogue undoubtedly has a special role to play in promoting mutual understanding and improving relations among nations. The Security Council must, among its responsibilities, join in efforts to promote greater rapprochement among cultures in order to overcome prejudice and strengthen reconciliation initiatives based on respect, tolerance, diversity, fairness and justice. To that end, the Council must be mindful of all extremist movements that threaten international peace and security.

We also feel that, when we speak of intercultural dialogue for peace and security, we should also incorporate notions of vital importance to the prevention and resolution of conflicts, such as the strengthening of democracy and the rule of law, the promotion and protection of human rights, and respect for international humanitarian law. The integration of those elements into the decisions adopted by the Security Council undoubtedly contributes to a culture of peace and to respect for traditions and beliefs.

Mexico feels that we should promote the added value of multicultural societies. While in theory the benefits of diversity are recognized, in practice some

sectors fear that it could weaken the State, cause conflicts and hold back development. We must demolish this myth in order to promote tolerance in favour of international peace and security.

As a nation with a deep-rooted multiethnic and pluricultural character resulting from its history, Mexico has a very rich and varied culture which is fed daily by the combination of all groups and individuals of the most diverse backgrounds, including the Lebanese immigration and groups and individuals who make up the Mexican nation. That is why we attach particular importance to the dialogue between cultures. This dialogue transcends borders whenever it deals with the ongoing communications and interrelations that flow between those groups and societies associated with the natural movements of persons who, for various reasons, emigrate to other parts of the world but also maintain close links with their countries of origin.

The free flow of persons should be accompanied by cultural understanding, tolerance and constructive dialogue in favour of open societies that respect plurality and difference.

Mexico is part of the Group of Friends of the initiative known as the Alliance of Civilizations, which seeks to prioritize dialogue and the search for mutual understanding among various cultures, both within our own societies as well as in relations among the peoples. Among its guiding principles the Alliance stresses appreciation for the diversity of civilizations and cultures, not only as a basic characteristic of human society, but as an engine of its progress. Thus its mechanisms are directed at promoting harmony and easing conflicts between different societies.

My country hopes that the Middle East will become an example of this in upcoming years, enjoying peace and security for all States, including Israel and Palestine.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I wish to welcome you, Your Excellency, Prime Minister Hariri, and to thank you for organizing and presiding over this important debate on intercultural dialogue for peace and security. We thank the Secretary-General for his statement. We also welcome the participation of The Honourable Alistair Burt, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the Government of the United Kingdom.

This debate provides an opportunity to focus on an important issue, particularly in view of General Assembly resolution 62/90, which declared 2010 the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. We are convinced that promotion of intercultural dialogue is one of the ways to foster peace and security.

Some of the current conflicts in some parts of the world could be attributed to a misperception and misinterpretation of diverse cultures and beliefs. Such misperception can also adversely affect or even fuel hatred, stereotypes and discrimination. In this context, therefore, dialogue and a deeper understanding between cultures play a significant role in addressing misconceptions and also help in fostering mutual respect and peaceful coexistence.

We commend the work of the Alliance of Civilizations, which has made important progress in bringing cultures closer together and strengthening intercultural understanding. Promoting intercultural dialogue is also essential in building a multilateral system based on mutual respect and in reinforcing common interests. Discussions such as this on intercultural dialogue create awareness and promote international solidarity, tolerance, stability and peace.

In this increasingly globalizing world, respect for cultural and religious diversity not only enriches national identity but also promotes dialogue among civilizations. That helps in creating an environment conducive to exchange of information, building mutual trust and understanding. Intercultural dialogue, cooperation and harmonious coexistence contribute significantly to the maintenance of international peace and security. They also help in clarifying the values of various cultures and faiths, thereby avoiding generalizations and misconceptions.

We are convinced that as the international community seeks to prevent and resolve conflicts and to deal with new threats, intercultural dialogue can play a useful role in tackling those issues. We therefore salute UNESCO's continued commitment to promoting intercultural understanding, as well as the outcome of the 2008 World Conference on Dialogue, held in Madrid, and the Second Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations, held in Istanbul in 2009.

It is critical to expand and strengthen cross-cultural contacts among various groups, including youth, civil society, the media and academia. It is

important to continue promoting intercultural dialogue for peace, for security and for development.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all I would like to express my gratitude to you, Sir, Prime Minister Hariri, for presiding over this meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

While the pursuit of peace, development and cooperation has become a major trend of our times, the world has also witnessed the emergence of new challenges to international peace and security. The interlinking of traditional and non-traditional security threats, the incessant outbreak of regional conflicts and hot-spot issues, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are threats that we cannot afford to ignore. Discrimination and prejudice against religions and cultures have given rise to violent conflicts and strife and have caused unprecedented clashes and friction among civilizations. The international community bears the common responsibility of strengthening cooperation to respond to those challenges, and it faces the arduous task of bridging differences and seeking common understanding.

China supports Lebanon's initiative to hold this thematic debate and believes that this meeting will help promote intercultural dialogue, enhance mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence among countries and maintain international peace and security.

Strengthening interfaith and intercultural dialogue is in conformity with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and is conducive to preventive diplomacy, peaceful settlement of disputes and post-conflict peacebuilding. It will also help the United Nations better fulfil its responsibility of maintaining international peace and security.

Here I would like to emphasize the following points. First, different faiths and cultures should be treated equally on the basis of mutual respect. While faiths and cultures vary in terms of the era of their origins and development, there is no hierarchy among them in terms of merit. All are a crystallization of human wisdom and have contributed to the progress and development of human society and thus deserve equal respect. Different faiths and cultures should learn from each other and coexist peacefully.

Secondly, intercultural dialogue should be strengthened in an open and inclusive spirit. History has shown that dialogue with other civilizations leads to mutual enrichment and development. In a post-crisis situation, strengthening intercultural dialogue is highly practical. Dialogue and discussion represent the best way to resolve differences and prevent conflict. Countries should adhere to the concepts of openness, inclusiveness and cooperation, and strengthen dialogue to overcome barriers, dispel misunderstandings and resolve disputes in order to prevent or reduce outbreaks of conflict.

Thirdly, we must show respect for differences and settle conflicts by peaceful means. Conflicts often result from the alienation, prejudice, discrimination and even hatred that can arise from differences. Our world should be varied yet harmonious. We believe that we should recognize and accept the diversity of our world and the differences among civilizations. We are opposed to linking terrorism to any particular nation, ethnic group or religion. The international community should function on the basis of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation. It should use peaceful means, such as mediation, negotiation and good offices, to resolve problems, settle disputes and promote the solution of regional hot-spot issues in order to build a harmonious family of States.

China supports and actively participates in the efforts of the international community to promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue and cooperation, and has been a constructive partner in multiple United Nations initiatives and mechanisms relating to dialogue among civilizations and the culture of peace. China is willing to continue to work with the international community to strengthen intercultural dialogue and build bridges of communication and cooperation, with a view to creating synergies promoting the maintenance of international peace and security, the advancement of common human development, and the building of a harmonious world.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): Nigeria joins other delegations in thanking Prime Minister Hariri for taking the time to come to New York to preside over today's Security Council meeting. We also welcome the presence of Mr. Alistair Burt, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, and thank him for his very insightful contribution. We welcome the Secretary-General and

appreciate his thoughtful remarks. Both the theme and the presence of Prime Minister Hariri attest to Lebanon's commitment to the ideals and objectives of the United Nations.

After all the statements that have been made around this table this morning, we are left in no doubt that dialogue and understanding are important instruments for international peace and security, particularly in a pluralistic society like ours. The United Nations is a fitting mosaic of our diversity, yet its Members are united in the common purpose of practicing tolerance and living together in peace with one another.

Therein lies the significance of the theme chosen by Lebanon for this debate. One cannot place a limit on the power and value of dialogue in promoting mutual cooperation, understanding, tolerance, respect for the views and interests of others, and, ultimately, unity in diversity. The idea of a culture of peace, dialogue of civilizations, interfaith dialogue and other similar concepts are not new to the United Nations. Indeed, they are the bedrock of international cooperation. It would seem, however, that there is a gap that Lebanon's initiative today will, we hope, help to fill. What is required is the political will and determination to promote these concepts as genuine tools for conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. There is no doubt that the search for international peace and security would benefit from new approaches and new perspectives.

Living as we do in a world that is integrated and interdependent, we should cultivate and embrace a culture of dialogue and understanding, rather than guns and soldiers, to settle our differences. Nigeria knows at first-hand the great challenges and benefits of a pluralistic society. The bringing together of peoples of diverse languages, traditions, cultures and religions has culminated in an expansive country that has witnessed enormously trying times and moments, but whose innate capacity to remain united has become almost unbreakable.

Nigeria is determined to preserve its unity and diversity, not only for itself but also to help its neighbours. We draw from our diversity the strength to promote peace and contribute to efforts to maintain peace and security elsewhere. Indeed, our national ideals are encapsulated in our motto of "Unity and faith, peace and progress". Inter-community and interfaith dialogues are some of the key instruments promoted and encouraged by my Government, with the full participation of civil society, united in the objective of promoting harmony and peaceful coexistence.

While considerable progress is being made within countries to promote dialogue and understanding for peace and stability, we believe that a great deal needs to be done at the international level. We risk missing out on the benefits of the global village in which all are able to realize their different aspirations and potential in peace and harmony. For this reason, we must all commit to promoting dialogue as a real tool of preventive diplomacy.

Nearly four decades ago, the late Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia warned that a philosophy that holds one race to be superior and another inferior could lead to war. This admonishment has played out in different theatres around the world, fuelled by differences in religion, ethnicity, language and culture, with dire consequences. The time has come for us to heed the words of Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". Respect for diversity is necessary for durable peace and security.

Let me thank you once again, Mr. President, for choosing the theme of intercultural dialogue for peace and security as a complement to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (Austria): I would to join other speakers in welcoming you, Sir, to the Security Council today. We thank you for presiding over this important debate and for your important remarks. We also appreciate your commitment and that of your country to the cause of intercultural dialogue for peace and security. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his participation and his statement.

In an increasingly interconnected world, the need for nations to promote peace and prosperity through dialogue, understanding and tolerance has become ever more important. In order to help prevent conflict, we must do everything we can to improve understanding among different cultures and religions, both at the global level and within our respective countries and regions. Dialogue aimed at enhancing mutual understanding must involve respect for different values and beliefs. At the same time, dialogue must be based on the full respect for all universally accepted human

rights and fundamental freedoms and on the principle of the rule of law.

Important work has been done by various United Nations bodies to underline the importance of and enhance intercultural dialogue. We also wish to acknowledge the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General and by individual Member States. The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, initiated by Turkey and Spain, has become a significant global forum for intercultural exchange and the enhancement of mutual understanding. Austria has been an active member of the Alliance from its very inception in 2005 and will be represented by Foreign Minister Spindelegger in the upcoming third annual Forum in Rio de Janeiro. We look forward to hosting the fifth annual Forum, scheduled for 2012 in Vienna.

Austria has a long tradition of dialogue initiatives between cultures and religions. Our activities focus on areas where we believe that we can find common ground, such as the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We also attach great importance to the promotion of social, cultural and religious pluralism and successful management of diversity. Fostering equal rights and opportunities for women and promoting their role and leadership in interreligious and intercultural dialogue are among the priority objectives of Austria's engagement in this field. In this context, in 2008 Austria and Lebanon successfully initiated a joint project entitled "The Role of Women in Dialogue: Empowerment and Consolidation".

Dialogue with Muslim communities and Islam has rightly attracted attention in recent years, in particular in Europe. I have to say that my country has specific experience in this area. In 2012, Austria will celebrate the centennial of legal recognition of Islam in our country, the first decision of this kind to be taken historically in Western Europe and a step that is of course linked to the historical experience we share with our neighbours at the Council table, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Just a few days ago, the Third Conference for European Imams and Religious Advisers took place in Vienna, with the support of the Austrian Government. Later this year, we will host the first Arab-European Young Leaders Forum, which aims at encouraging emerging leaders from Europe, including Turkey, and the Arab world to develop partnerships for better understanding and enhanced cooperation.

Together with Indonesia and Singapore, we have started a series of bilateral dialogue programmes. Based on the first diplomatic staff exchange in the field of intercultural dialogue with Indonesia, Austria will continue such exchange activities with other countries in cooperation with the League of Arab States. We would be happy to see other countries join this initiative.

In your remarks, Sir, you touched upon the conflict in the Middle East, which is clearly one of the areas where a meaningful dialogue between both sides is essential and indispensable in the search for common understanding. To that end, dialogue efforts should be concentrated on concrete goals and objectives in order to contribute to building trust and to generate real added value. We obviously also share the view that Jerusalem, with its unique heritage and tradition, can and should play a key role as a place of dialogue and encounter among cultures and civilizations.

We believe that the Security Council can make important contributions to promoting dialogue among cultures and civilizations with a view, in particular, to enhancing international peace and security in relation to relevant situations on its agenda. The Council could more actively encourage steps towards meaningful dialogue to help prevent and manage conflict and to build sustainable peace, both in international and intra-State conflicts, where appropriate.

Effective dialogue will normally result in compromise solutions that balance the interests of various actors. That being said, the Council needs to insist at the same time that the principles of the rule of law, the needs of transitional justice, human rights and fundamental freedoms be respected. Intercultural dialogue as a means of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding can be truly effective only if all sectors of the societies concerned are included.

The Council should therefore stress that women's contributions need to be integrated into dialogue efforts, pointing to the vital role women can play in re-establishing post-conflict societies, fostering tolerance and building sustainable peace.

When considering the promotion of intercultural dialogue as a means of conflict prevention and mediation, conflict resolution or peacebuilding, the Council could also intensify cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, which in many

instances have the advantage of being well acquainted with local and regional dynamics.

In conclusion, I wish to thank you once again, Sir, for this opportunity to reflect upon the issue of intercultural dialogue for conflict prevention, conflict management and peacebuilding, as well for the important insights you have shared with us based on your country's unique experience in this field.

The President: I would like to thank all members for their participation here today, and add that we should not wait for disaster to happen before we react. We say this in the very same building where we wo to prevent disasters, conflicts and wars. I believe th intercultural dialogue is key to avoiding conflict especially if it is combined with the rule of law a very strong political will.

(*spoke in Arabic*)

There are no further speakers inscribed on m list. The Security Council has thus concluded th present stage of its consideration of the item on i agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6323

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6323rd meeting

Thursday, 27 May 2010, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Ziade	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mr. Moretti
	China	Mr. Long Zhou
	France	Mr. Bonne
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mr. Amieyeofori
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Twenty-fourth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2010/245)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-37863 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Twenty-fourth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2010/245)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bailly (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2010/253, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

I wish to draw the attention of members of the Council to document S/2010/245, which contains the twenty-fourth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2010/220, which contains a letter dated 26 April 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1924 (2010).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 3.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6324

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6324th meeting

Friday, 28 May 2010, 09.45 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Salam	(Lebanon)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Vukašinović
	Brazil	Mr. Moretti
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mr. Lolo
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Mugoya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Thirty-first report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2010/164)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-37989 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 9.50 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Thirty-first report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2010/164)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Gabon, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, document S/2010/256.

I should like to draw the attention of members to document S/2010/164, which contains the thirty-first report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1925 (2010).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 9.55 a.m.